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Security Council

Sixty-fifth year

Provisional

6255th meeting

Wednesday, 6 January 2010, 10 a.m.
New York

President:	Mr. Zhang Yesui	(China)
Members:	Austria	Mr. Ebner
	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Mr. Barbalić
	Brazil	Mrs. Viotti
	France	Mr. Araud
	Gabon	Mr. Moungara Moussotsi
	Japan	Mr. Takasu
	Lebanon	Mr. Salam
	Mexico	Mr. Puente
	Nigeria	Mrs. Ogwu
	Russian Federation	Mr. Churkin
	Turkey	Mr. Çorman
	Uganda	Mr. Rugunda
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Sir Mark Lyall Grant
	United States of America	Ms. DiCarlo

Agenda

The situation in Afghanistan

Report of the Secretary-General on the situation in Afghanistan and its implications for international peace and security (S/2009/674)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.20 a.m.

Expression of welcome to new members and of thanks to outgoing members of the Council

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): As this is the first meeting of the Security Council this year, I should like to extend my very warm wishes for a fruitful new year to all members of the Security Council, the United Nations and the Secretariat. I wish them every success in the New Year.

On behalf of the Council, I would like to extend a warm welcome to the new members: Bosnia and Herzegovina, Brazil, Gabon, Lebanon and Nigeria. We look forward with confidence to their participation in the work of the Council. Their experience and wisdom will be of invaluable assistance in the discharge of the Council's enormous responsibilities.

I would like to take this opportunity to express the Council's deep gratitude to the outgoing members — Burkina Faso, Costa Rica, Croatia, the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya and Viet Nam — for their important contributions to the Council's work during their term in 2008 and 2009.

Expression of thanks to the retiring President

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): I should also like to take this opportunity to pay tribute, on behalf of the Council, to Mr. Michel Kafando, Permanent Representative of Burkina Faso, for his service as President of the Security Council for the month of December 2009. I am sure I speak for all members of the Council in expressing deep appreciation to Ambassador Kafando for the great diplomatic skill with which he conducted the Council's business last month.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation in Afghanistan

Report of the Secretary-General on the situation in Afghanistan and its implications for international peace and security (S/2009/674)

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): I should like to inform the Council that I have received letters from the representatives of Afghanistan, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, Pakistan and Norway, in which they request to be invited to participate in the consideration of the item on the Council's agenda. In conformity with the usual practice, I propose, with the consent of the Council, to invite those representatives to participate in the consideration of the item, without the right to vote, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter and rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

At the invitation of the President, Mr. Tanin (Afghanistan) took a seat at the Council table, the representatives of the other aforementioned countries took the seats reserved for them at the side of the Council Chamber.

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): In accordance with the understanding reached in the Council's prior consultations, I shall take it that the Security Council agrees to extend invitations under rule 39 of its provisional rules of procedure to Mr. Kai Eide, Special Representative of the Secretary-General and head of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan, and to Mr. Peter Schwaiger, acting head of the delegation of the European Union to the United Nations.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

I invite Mr. Eide to take a seat at the Council table.

I invite Mr. Schwaiger to take the seat reserved for him at the side of the Council Chamber.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Council is meeting in accordance with the understanding reached in its prior consultations.

Members of the Council have before them document S/2009/674, which contains the report of the Secretary-General on the situation in Afghanistan and its implications for international peace and security.

I welcome the presence of the Secretary-General, His Excellency Mr. Ban Ki-moon, and invite him to take the floor.

The Secretary-General: Let me begin by offering my warmest greetings for the new year, 2010. I hope and trust that it will bring greater peace and serenity, to both the public and private affairs of peoples and nations around the world.

I welcome the new members of the Council: Bosnia and Herzegovina, Brazil, Lebanon, Nigeria and Gabon. I wish them a fruitful and distinguished tenure on the Council. I also wish to commend the contributions made by Burkina Faso, Costa Rica, Croatia, the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya and Viet Nam as non-permanent members of the Council during the past two years. Of course, I would like to congratulate the Permanent Representative of China on his assumption of the presidency of the Council for this month.

I welcome this opportunity to brief the Council on the situation in Afghanistan. Following my remarks, Special Representative Kai Eide will provide an update.

Last year was another extremely challenging period for Afghanistan and for international efforts to assist the Government and its people. Difficult elections, deteriorating security and doubts about the current strategies of both the Government and the international community all combined to produce further violence and uncertainty for a country facing immense challenges.

There can be no doubt that Afghanistan will remain one of our main priorities in 2010. Let me focus on two aspects in particular: first, strengthening the role of the Afghan Government, and secondly, coordinating international civilian efforts under the United Nations umbrella.

The United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) and the United Nations Development Programme, alongside other international organizations and bilateral representatives, played an instrumental role in helping the Afghan authorities to conduct last year's presidential and provincial council elections. The electoral process was problematic, to say the least. That should have been no surprise, given the security conditions and institutional limitations.

Still, the elections did produce results that were ultimately accepted. Preparations for this year's parliamentary elections are expected to start soon. Should the Government ask for United Nations assistance and if the Security Council agrees, the United Nations is ready to support the process through technical assistance and institution-building. More generally, we hope that the tremendous political energy released during last year's elections will now be directed towards forging a meaningful, realistic and renewed compact between the Afghan Government and its people.

President Karzai's inaugural speech was encouraging. The priorities that he set out reflect the real issues facing Afghan society: security, good governance, corruption, national unity and the need to expand cooperation with the country's neighbours so as to address drug trafficking and other cross-border threats to stability. President Karzai also made an explicit commitment to ensuring measurable achievements, allowing for the start of a gradual transfer of responsibilities from international actors to Afghan institutions, particularly in the field of security. That is especially important given that conditions across the country have deteriorated further.

While the violence was caused by a politically driven insurgency, it has also been exploited by criminal groups, drug traffickers and others. There have been increased civilian casualties and greater risks for UNAMA and other Afghan partners. Efforts by the Taliban and insurgents to prevent people from participating in the electoral process have also destroyed social structures and traditional security mechanisms.

This insecurity remains the single biggest impediment to progress. Last year, about three times as many civilian deaths were attributed to anti-Government elements as to pro-Government forces. Most resulted from suicide attacks and improvised explosive devices used by anti-Government elements or air strikes by pro-Government forces. The vulnerability of civilians is a serious issue, with great implications for the standing of the Government and its partners in steering the country towards stability and peace. I urge all parties to do their utmost to uphold international human rights and humanitarian law.

Afghanistan is at a critical juncture. All key players, Afghan and international, have drawn important lessons from controversial experiences and missed opportunities. I appeal to both the Afghan Government and the international community to make the best possible use of the next few months.

The international community has reaffirmed its resolve to complete the task of erasing the terrorist threat. The sharpened strategies demonstrate a clear understanding that continued pursuit of the same policies will not lead to success, but if these strategies are to be implemented in an efficient and timely

manner, the new Afghan Government must fulfil its far-reaching pledges. At the same time, the relationship between Afghanistan and its international partners must be re-evaluated. Well-prepared international conferences, both inside and outside Afghanistan, can help to ensure the sustainability of the international community's efforts.

The forthcoming International Conference to be held in London on 28 January offers an important opportunity for fresh impetus, both to the international effort and to that of the newly established Government in Kabul, to provide greater stability and support to the security and development needs of Afghanistan. While external assistance can help, it is for the Afghans to take ownership of these efforts through strong commitment and good governance.

I appreciate the initiative taken by the leaders of the United Kingdom, France and Germany in convening this meeting. I also commend the important contribution made by the group of friends of Afghanistan. In this regard, I welcome the new approach by United States President Obama that seeks an optimal balance between military and civilian efforts, and that would strengthen cooperation with the United Nations. It is clear that there is a need for broader and more effective civilian efforts, which will require much better international coordination.

UNAMA is mandated to lead this coordination, and Special Representative Kai Eide has suggested exploring the viability of a dedicated civilian coordination structure, in consultation with the Afghan Government and international stakeholders. Ultimately, however, the main obstacle is not the lack of structures or even a shortage of resources, although both of these play a part. Rather, the main problem is a question of political will. Better coordination based on the strong political willingness of donor countries and strong local effort is key to resolving the current situation. We need strategies that meet the requirements of building sustainable institutions to deliver services to the Afghan people and to develop the Afghan economy.

At a time of increasingly challenging security conditions and a more demanding political environment, our task is that much more difficult. But if it is more arduous for us, imagine how it feels to the average Afghan. Despite the uncertainties, the United Nations remains firmly committed to supporting the men and women of Afghanistan in finding the path of stability and peace. We are also committed to ensuring the safety and security of our local and international staff in this increasingly dangerous Mission. Their courage, dedication and, often, outright heroism are an inspiration to us all.

At this moment, I wish to recall those who have paid for this service with their lives. We can expect more terror attacks, and I again ask for the Council's full support in doing everything possible to ensure the well-being of the Mission's personnel.

Let me close with a word on Special Representative Kai Eide. His intrepid spirit, strong determination and selfless dedication have sustained the Mission during these past critical months. His contribution will be remembered with gratitude both by this Organization and the people of Afghanistan.

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): I thank the Secretary-General for his statement.

At this meeting, the Security Council will hear a briefing by Mr. Kai Eide. On behalf of the Council, I would like to express our gratitude to Mr. Eide, who is today making his last appearance before the Council in his capacity as Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Afghanistan. We have appreciated Mr. Eide's capable leadership of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan and his unwavering approach to this challenging work since he assumed the post in March 2008. We wish him success in all of his future endeavours. I now give the floor to Mr. Eide.

Mr. Eide: Let me first express my gratitude to the Secretary-General for being here and for his very kind words.

On this very day nine years ago, the United Nations undertook its post-Taliban engagement in Afghanistan, and I believe that, together, we have achieved quite a lot in that time in the areas of education, health, building State institutions and so on. But I must also say that today, nine years later, I am worried about negative trends. I am worried about the growing impatience of public opinion in the donor and troop-contributing countries. I am worried about increasing frustration among the Afghan public over what they see as expectations that have not been met. And I am worried about the difficulties experienced by the international and Afghan forces in putting the insurgency on the defensive. If these negative trends

are not reversed — and reversed soon — there is a risk that they, in combination, will become unmanageable.

As the Secretary-General pointed out, the political calendar has been set, with the London Conference to take place in three weeks from now and the Kabul conference later this year. Now, we have to get the political agenda right — or rather, quite frankly, return to the political priorities set in The Hague and in Paris. We have lost valuable time, especially in the past six months, when the protracted election process has diverted energy from pursuing the priorities we had set.

The London Conference will focus mainly on security issues. On 23 January, the Joint Coordination and Monitoring Board in Kabul will decide on the increase in the police force and on a reform programme for the police. The London Conference should endorse those decisions. It should also signal an acceleration of the training and mentoring of the Army and a gradual transfer of authority from the international to the Afghan security forces. That will be the first step in a new transition strategy that can allow Afghans to be in charge of their future.

However, as the Secretary-General also pointed out, this transition strategy must include key civilian areas and the systematic build-up of civilian institutions to enable the Government to deliver services to its people, and the development of the Afghan economy to enable the Government to pay for those services when international aid is reduced. If we do not take these civilian aspects of the transition strategy as seriously as we do the military, then we will fail.

What we need is a strategy that is politically and not militarily driven. For years there has been a consensus, at least in rhetoric, that this conflict cannot ultimately be solved by military means. However, most of our focus has nonetheless been on the number and activities of military forces. The political strategy is too often shaped as an appendix to military thinking.

For years there has also been a consensus, at least in rhetoric, that the process of Afghanization must be accelerated. However, structures that parallel the Afghan Government have not been reduced, and according to the last donor financial review from the Afghan Government, 80 per cent of aid to Afghanistan has been provided through bilateral projects, bypassing the Government. Less than 10 per cent of total aid has been provided to the Government, but only a quarter of that amount is not earmarked for a specific activity in the budget. The situation has improved somewhat over the past year, but only somewhat, and remains basically the same as I have just indicated. These figures do not demonstrate a mindset whereby Afghans are allowed to take the lead.

To me, the London and Kabul conferences represent critical opportunities to agree on a politically driven strategy in which Afghan ownership and Afghan capacity stand at the centre of all our activities. The military surge must not be allowed to undermine equally important civilian objectives and the development of this politically driven strategy. It must not lead to increased pressure for quick results in governance and economic development efforts, which would divert resources from a long-term approach to civilian institution-building and economic growth. Furthermore, it must not lead the military to expand its engagement in key civilian areas such as those I have mentioned. That could result in a situation where the international community becomes more entrenched rather than one where the Afghans are more empowered.

Let me outline what I see as the components of a political strategy, some of which I have touched on before around this table. First of these is a systematic approach to the building of civilian institutions. This is not only a question of not appointing corrupt officials, although anti-corruption will be an important part of the effort. It is a question of training and education, of infrastructure and incentives. Soon the Civil Service Institute in Kabul and 32 provinces will have the ability to train 16,000 officials in key bureaucratic skills. At the moment, 1,700 young men and women from all provinces are being trained as future administrators in the National Institute for Management and Administration. Thus, the institutions exist, but they are fragile and underfunded.

Furthermore, we need attractive incentives to ensure that young people who are trained by the Government also go to work for the Government, and that young people who come from the provinces and districts return to the provinces and districts. Today, a district governor earns $70 a month. Half of them have no dedicated office, and they normally have an operating budget of $15 per month. It will cost hundreds of millions of dollars to implement an ambitious institution-building programme, but it is the best investment we can make in Afghanistan's future.

Today, the Government lacks the delivery mechanisms in terms of substantive national institutions able to provide services. Our main challenge must be to develop these tools and to expand the reach of the Government, instead of continuing to rely on parallel international structures that one day will be withdrawn.

Secondly, as to human resource development, the education system is seriously unbalanced, as I think I have also mentioned. I think I mentioned before that, today, the number of young girls and boys in primary school is 7 million, but there is room for only 60,000 of them in universities and 20,000 in vocational education. These are serious imbalances, and we must all take our share of the responsibility to correct them, because it is important for the development of Afghanistan's economy.

Thirdly, the critical sector of agriculture continues to be seriously underfunded, in spite of the fact that at least 80 per cent of the population is dependent on that sector, and in spite of the fact that it was identified as a key priority in The Hague and, before that, in Paris. Some even say that, in light of its impact on poverty reduction, job creation and revenue collection, the development of agriculture will decide whether the country fails or succeeds.

Fourthly, infrastructure remains a neglected sector in spite of rich mineral resources that could be exploited, provide huge income and employ tens and perhaps hundreds of thousands of people. The country has Asia's largest iron ore deposits and a number of other exploitable minerals. The United Nations and the Government have together identified transportation networks and energy supplies as top priorities for starting mining projects that would provide real economic growth.

And, finally, a peace and reconciliation process must be launched and become an integrated part of the political agenda. It must be based on the Constitution and be Afghan-owned and Afghan-led; and if the insurgency were to agree to join a peace process, that would significantly enhance the prospect of troop withdrawals. However, by joining a peace process, the insurgents must also distance themselves from the past and embrace the future, as well as the progress that has been achieved over the past few years. I have said before that I am ready to meet anybody, anywhere, if it can serve the purpose of peace. I believe that is the role of the United Nations whenever the Afghan Government seeks our support, and within the framework of our mandate.

So these are, in my view, the key components of the political agenda. The London Conference can endorse a number of decisions, particularly in the security sector. In other areas, the London Conference should provide a road map for the time between London and Kabul so that, at the Kabul Conference, we can aim at having fundable projects ready in order to give momentum to the strategy of transition and contribute to turning the current negative trends around.

With these challenges ahead of us, it is important for all, and first of all the Afghan people, that a strong and reform-oriented Government be put in place without further delay. The parliament's rejection of 17 candidates last week was a setback because it prolongs a situation where Afghanistan is without an established and functioning Government. This is particularly serious, of course, in a country in conflict, with so many challenges that need to be urgently addressed. At the same time, of course, parliament demonstrated that it is far from a rubber-stamping body. Soon the President will present new candidates, and it is my strong hope that parliament will then be able to consider those candidates as quickly as possible.

The Secretary-General mentioned further improved coordination mechanisms, which are important. There has been some political progress over the last few years. I believe the international community speaks with one voice in important political matters. The Joint Coordination and Monitoring Board reforms that the United Nations initiated in 2008 have yielded a more effective coordination mechanism. Together with the Afghan Government, we have also been able to identify key priorities more clearly and develop critical initiatives in areas such as agriculture and capacity-building.

The next challenge is to align donor resources behind these priorities, and there are some positive and promising signs that this is actually happening. But we need stronger coordination instruments. I have therefore, with the Minister of Finance, put together proposals that we believe will be an important step forward.

These proposals are based on a continued United Nations coordination umbrella, with all of us working

more closely under Afghan leadership. This plan will integrate officials of key donors into UNAMA's coordination structures, thereby ensuring that we are constantly plugged into donors' planning processes and can influence them at an early stage. However, these efforts must also be accompanied by greater efforts within the International Security Assistance Force to bring provincial reconstruction teams in line with Government plans and gradually transfer civilian projects carried out within the framework of military institutions to civilian structures.

This coordination must now have a nationwide perspective. I have repeatedly — boring some, both here and in the capitals — emphasized the importance of not concentrating resources only in the south and the east, but also investing in the centre and the north of the country. That has not happened, however. Before leaving for New York, I asked a number of prominent Afghan politicians why the insurgency has spread over the last few years. There is no simple answer, but one element mentioned by all was the neglect of stable provinces in the allocation of development resources. For that neglect, we now have to pay a high price.

However, with regard to coordination, I should add that there are limitations. With hundreds of donors, agencies and non-governmental organizations, there are limitations in Afghanistan, as there would be in any other country. Any institution, including the United Nations, can go only so far in successfully coordinating all actors.

The Independent Electoral Commission (IEC) has announced that elections for the next parliament will take place on 22 May, in accordance with the Constitution. I certainly cannot criticize the IEC or any of the prominent politicians who were consulted for respecting the Constitution, which represents the foundation for all orderly political activity. There are technical reasons that will make it challenging to keep this timeline. Security remains a major concern, and the presidential elections demonstrated a need for reform of electoral institutions.

Article 55 of the electoral law gives the IEC the right to postpone elections on the basis of security, financial or technical considerations. Should Afghan authorities make use of that provision, then elections could be held later in the year, but in a way that still respects the Afghan legal system.

In terms of reform, the President has expressed his intention to Afghanize the election process. I would support that position — as long as it results in elections that are considered to be fair and impartial by the Afghan public. During the last elections there was widespread fraud, which demonstrated the weakness of electoral institutions and a difficult security situation. There was also a perception of international interference, which I will say undoubtedly also occurred, before and after election day. Both must be eliminated in future electoral processes.

Let me add a few words about the presidential elections that are now behind us. The Secretary-General's report explains in some detail the approach that we took. But I want to emphasize here and now how fragile the political situation was in the aftermath of the first round. Significant economic resources left the country in anticipation of political instability. The number of visa applications rose dramatically for the same reason. The possibility of serious instability and violence was avoided through a careful handling of the process until the very last minute. The international community stood together, I must say, under United Nations leadership, and the Afghan political actors behaved responsibly and with respect for the Constitution. Those were important achievements and must not be underestimated.

Finally, since this meeting is my last before the Council, I think it is important for me to emphasize a fundamental aspect of our international approach to Afghanistan. There is a tendency in the international community to shape strategies, make decisions and operate on the ground in a way that Afghans perceive as disrespectful and sometimes arrogant. Afghans do sometimes feel that their country is treated as a no-man's land and not as a sovereign State. That perception contributes to unnecessary and dangerous tensions between the Afghan Government and the international community. It fuels suspicions of unacceptable foreign interference and breeds a sense of humiliation. I cannot emphasize strongly enough the need to bring this phenomenon to an end.

Military activities, civilian casualties, house searches and detention policies are sources of recruitment for the insurgency. In the Afghan context, what affects one individual in a village affects everyone there. I am pleased to see General McChrystal's efforts to reduce the number of such incidents and to demonstrate greater respect for Afghan

sensitivities. The military surge will certainly make that challenge even more difficult. However, whether we are military or civilian, we must better understand the Afghan context and Afghan society. Even among ordinary Afghans who want our presence — and they are the majority — there are many who resent what they see as disrespect for their religion, their culture and their values. Success in our long-term partnership will depend on consulting more, listening more and demonstrating greater understanding for a society that needs our assistance but also demands our respect. We have to learn the pulse of Afghan society, which is very different from our own.

UNAMA has been through some difficult months. UNAMA's staff consists of dedicated, knowledgeable and brave people. The terrible attack against the Bakhtar guest house was traumatic and illustrated that the United Nations is today more a target of attacks. But it also demonstrated the strength and solidarity of those who work for the United Nations in Afghanistan. Every effort is being undertaken to ensure that we can all continue our work, with safety and security for United Nations staff. I am grateful for the support of the Secretary-General and Member States in that respect.

At the same time, we are facing a crisis in recruitment that jeopardizes the future of the Mission. When I took over UNAMA in March 2008, its vacancy rate stood at 30 per cent. By working with the Department of Field Support we were able to reduce that rate to 12 per cent, which is very, very good. Unfortunately, I have no such good news at this juncture. The number of staff members who left the Mission in the last six months of 2009 stands at 50, mainly due to security concerns and understandable fatigue. The number of staff members who have been hired by UNAMA during the same time period is five. The vacancy rate at the end of last year was around 25 per cent. On top of that come the new posts provided through the 2010 budget, which will push the vacancy rate even higher.

The new recruitment system put in place in July 2009 simply has not worked. In many cases it does not offer the kind of staff that UNAMA needs. In every case it has been far too slow. All vacancy announcements have been closed, meaning that people who have recently become interested in coming to Afghanistan are not able to apply. This is, in my view, a result of systemic flaws that affect not only UNAMA, but all peacekeeping missions and special political missions and, if not corrected, will threaten their effectiveness and possibly even worse.

This is, as you said, Sir, my last briefing as Special Representative of the Secretary-General in Afghanistan. I have set out a political agenda that I believe is required to turn around the current negative trends. I am convinced that these trends can be turned around and that the conflict can be brought to an end in a way that serves the Afghan people and stability in a wider sense. But that will require discipline by all, constant efforts to give Afghans more of the responsibility for their own country and a commitment to a long-term partnership with the people who will continue to need our support.

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): I now give the floor to the representative of Afghanistan.

Mr. Tanin (Afghanistan): I would like to first congratulate you, Mr. President, for assuming the presidency of the Council for the month of January and thank you for convening this first debate of the new year.

As we are beginning a new year, I would also like to welcome the new members of the Council. Let me take a moment to thank Japan for its work in 2009 as a lead country for the issue of Afghanistan in the Security Council and to welcome Turkey to that role in 2010. I look forward to working closely with them this year.

I would also like to thank the Secretary-General for his presence in the Council and his remarks today and for his most recent report on Afghanistan (S/2009/674), and in particular for making Afghanistan one of his priorities and for the personal attention he has dedicated to Afghanistan in past months. Further, especially in the face of the tragedy of 28 October 2009, I would like to thank the United Nations and all of its entities, including this body, for the substantial and invaluable aid that has been extended to the Afghan people in past decades.

In addition, as this is the last appearance of Mr. Eide in this Council in his capacity as Special Representative of the Secretary-General, let me offer him my own heartfelt thanks and the sincere gratitude of the people and Government of Afghanistan. He has shown tremendous dedication to the cause of peace and stability in Afghanistan and has displayed ingenuity

and persistence under extremely challenging circumstances. He has pushed for a stronger United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) and for practical steps towards real progress in Afghanistan. Perhaps most importantly, he has consistently worked — most recently during the elections — for closer cooperation and better understanding between all parties in and outside of Afghanistan. We thank him.

With the conclusion of the presidential elections — an important but difficult milestone — Afghanistan has reached a new beginning, defined by a five-year mandate to bring Afghans closer to taking control of their own future. In his inaugural address, President Karzai outlined his plan to fulfil that mandate. He committed himself and his Administration to peace, to the physical and economic security of the Afghan people, to national participation and reconciliation, to good governance and to the fight against corruption.

Most importantly, we all share the same ultimate goal: to prepare and empower Afghans to take charge of their own destinies. In the next five years, the central goal of the Afghan Government will be preparing for the transition to full Afghan rule by strengthening Afghanistan's sovereignty and national ownership. We aim to consolidate national authority and improve the Government's capacity and institutions. We call upon the international community to ensure that every action taken in Afghanistan is in support of those efforts.

The formation of a new Afghan Government is an important first step in this new beginning. After the parliament's rejection of some of the ministerial nominees, the President is preparing to introduce new candidates and has instructed parliament to finalize their votes of confidence before they recess for the winter. We are eager to avoid any delay in the formation of the Government and any vacuum in management that could be counterproductive for Afghanistan at such a delicate time.

Next, the Afghan Government and the international community must look together at the challenges facing us and forge a compact that clearly identifies our strategies and responsibilities. On 28 January, a conference will be held in London, chaired jointly by President Karzai, Prime Minister Brown and the Secretary-General. That conference will be followed closely by a second in Kabul. The London Conference will prepare a road map — as Mr. Eide just put it — for future efforts, which will be transformed into a detailed action plan in Kabul, possibly in March. In London, focus will be directed towards security and the Afghanization of security and defence, social and economic development, good governance and international and regional cooperation. For each of those areas, we will need to clearly define the respective roles of the Afghan Government and the international community.

Afghans are ready to take responsibility for securing our people and defending ourselves against our enemies. In three years' time, the Afghan National Security Forces will assume responsibility for security and defence in conflict areas in the south and east of Afghanistan. In five years, with the necessary training, equipment and long-term resources from the international community, we will assume full responsibility for security and defence across the entire country. The international forces will be able to transition simultaneously to a role focused on training and enabling local forces.

However, there is a general consensus that peace and stability in Afghanistan cannot be reached through purely military means. As a result, the Government of Afghanistan has always been, and remains, committed to reconciliation and the integration of former combatants into all levels of Afghanistan's civilian and security structures. Afghanistan's Government has opened its door to all Afghans willing to participate in the stabilization and reconstruction of their country, in line with the Afghan Constitution and with respect for human rights.

But while reconciliation is an Afghan-led effort, it cannot be achieved by the Afghan Government alone. We ask this Council to conduct a review of the consolidated list established under resolution 1267 (1999) with a view to possibly removing from the sanctions list, upon request by the Afghan Government, elements of the Taliban willing to renounce violence and join the peace process.

Afghans continue to face crippling poverty and widespread unemployment, and their trust is wearing thin. Social and economic development and good governance remain important priorities for Afghanistan. However, it cannot sustain those efforts without the continued assistance of its international

partners. The London Conference will be an opportunity for the Government of Afghanistan and international friends to coordinate their development and capacity-building efforts so that Afghanistan may eventually mobilize its resources, generate income and jobs for its people and begin to support its institutions.

As the Secretary-General concluded in his report, reinforced efforts towards coordination of donor aid and civilian and military strategies are vital for our efforts in Afghanistan. Afghanistan supports the central coordinating role of UNAMA, as mandated by this Council. We should discuss further what shape any additional mechanisms might take and how they would relate to the relevant actors. Crucially, any focus on coordination must strengthen Afghan institutions and encourage Afghan national ownership, rather than promoting parallel governance structures.

Afghanistan is fast approaching its parliamentary elections, which will occur at the end of May, as required by the Constitution. We must ensure a credible process. In that regard, the lessons learned from last year's elections will be important. We feel that any suggestion that the elections be postponed ignores constitutional requirements and will damage the integrity of the process. The rule of law must be maintained, even as that law evolves to reflect lessons learned.

In conclusion, a true partnership between Afghanistan and the international community is important for success in Afghanistan. That partnership will require realism — about timing, about resources and about abilities — and a clear understanding of our roles and responsibilities. Most important, that partnership should be based on supporting and encouraging strong Afghan national ownership, in particular as we seek to transfer security and defence responsibilities. Afghanization and the promotion of Afghan capacity and leadership must be the ultimate aim of all of our activities and the central consideration during discussions going forward.

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): I shall now give the floor to members of the Council.

Mr. Çorman (Turkey): As this is the first open meeting of the Council this month, I wish to congratulate the Permanent Mission of China and you yourself, Sir, on your assumption of the presidency of the Council for the month of January. I would also like to welcome to the Council the five newly elected members, while at the same time paying tribute to the five former members for successfully completing their terms on the Council. I would like to thank Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon for his comprehensive report (S/2009/674) and his Special Representative, Mr. Kai Eide, for his informative and frank briefing. We join the Secretary-General and you, Mr. President, in recognizing Mr. Eide's excellent service in Afghanistan. I would also like to welcome Permanent Representative of Afghanistan to the Council.

We would like to commend the report of the Secretary-General, which provides a comprehensive outlook. We also agree with the report's content and observations. This meeting is taking place at a time when many developments are unfolding with regard to Afghanistan. We would therefore like to give Turkey's views concerning the situation in Afghanistan. I will limit my remarks to three main areas: international developments and the strengthening of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA), regional developments and the parliamentary elections.

First, it is a welcome development that the international community is widely discussing developments in Afghanistan. While doing so — as has been clearly expressed by Mr. Eide — we should design our priorities in cooperation with the Afghan Administration. Turkey believes that there is a need for a comprehensive approach. This should include security, governance, the rule of law, human rights and social and economic development. But it should not be limited to military means alone. In addition, four areas need special attention: comprehensive economic development, strong and well-trained Afghan military and police, inclusive national reconciliation and a modern education and justice system to effectively combat extremism. In other words, a political and economic action plan is needed.

As suggested in the report, the role of UNAMA should be strengthened in order to better serve the Afghan people. The new role should be designed jointly with the Afghan Administration. On the other hand, security threats against the United Nations are increasing. This is the first time that the United Nations has been targeted so deliberately. However, those terrorist attacks should not deter us. They should only strengthen our determination to assist the Afghan people. The continuation of a strong United Nations presence is of the utmost importance. We should

therefore all support the Secretary-General in his efforts to that end.

Secondly, we think that regional ownership could be a key to success in Afghanistan. While there are several international developments unfolding regarding Afghanistan, regional cooperation should be encouraged as well. From that perspective, in 2007, Turkey initiated the Turkey-Afghanistan-Pakistan trilateral summit process. The fourth trilateral summit will take place in Turkey on 24 January, with a focus on education.

Similarly, we will also host a regional summit on 26 January with the participation of the neighbours of Afghanistan and some observers, so that those attending the London Conference on 28 January — where regional cooperation will be one of the topics to be discussed — can bring with them regional input. The regional summit will aim to address challenges that are common to countries of the region, as well as to enhance regional dialogue. We will also host the fourth Regional Economic Cooperation Conference on Afghanistan in Turkey in 2010.

Thirdly, I would like to reiterate our views with regard to elections. We believe that the new Administration should embrace the whole nation following the presidential elections. It should refocus on national unity and reconstruction efforts as soon as possible. It should reach out to all ethnic groups through inclusive policies. On the other hand, all who competed against President Karzai in the elections should offer their support to the new Administration. In our opinion, what Afghanistan needs now is to strengthen democratic values and an efficient State mechanism to combat several problems, including misconduct. In democracies, parliaments stand for those two elements.

Along the same lines, it would be quite preferable for the parliamentary elections be held in 2010, as foreseen in the Afghan Constitution. If there is need for improvement in some procedures, these could, and should, be realized. But since the international community is defending the rule of law, it is hard to explain the postponement of the elections. They may be delayed for some time, but not for a long time. The elections should be seen as a tool, but not as an obstacle: a tool to encourage different groups to join in national reconciliation and national unity.

Finally, we would like to reiterate that, in addition to our diplomatic efforts, Turkey will continue its contribution in Afghanistan in the period ahead, in cooperation with the United Nations. We are also the lead country on Afghanistan in the Council for this year.

Mr. Salam (Lebanon) (*spoke in Arabic*): First of all, I would like to congratulate you, Sir, on your assumption of the presidency of the Council as we begin a new year. I reiterate our great confidence in your wisdom and experience.

I should also like to take this opportunity, as I make my first statement on behalf of Lebanon as a non-permanent member of the Security Council, to reaffirm my country's commitment to work to promote the principles and provisions of international law and mutual respect and equality among States. I also reaffirm that, thanks to its unique experience, Lebanon is fully aware of the importance of the values of diversity, tolerance and solidarity. Through our presence in the Council, we hope to contribute to answering the call for dialogue and understanding among cultures and civilizations and for a more democratic and just world.

I also wish to thank the Secretary-General for his report on the situation in Afghanistan and its implications for international peace and security (S/2009/674), as well as for his presence among us today. I would like also to thank Mr. Kai Eide, Special Representative of the Secretary-General and head of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA), for his efforts and his comprehensive briefing today. I also thank him for the important conclusions he has drawn, and in particular for his focus on the central importance of the political process. I wish him every success in his future endeavours.

Lebanon would like to underscore the fundamental role played by the United Nations in Afghanistan in helping that country to secure the basis for its sovereignty, independence and national unity.

Lebanon welcomes the pivotal role UNAMA played in coordinating international efforts aiming to allow the Afghan people to progressively become the masters of their destiny. The holding of presidential elections in Afghanistan was a test and a challenge for the international community and for Afghanistan's constitutional institutions. This issue was a subject of great controversy and revealed flaws that must be

corrected. However, the process did lead to results that could be developed in order to consolidate the principles of democracy and the rule of law.

Lebanon welcomes the ratification by the Afghan parliament of a number of laws with respect to human rights and to combating terrorism. Moreover, the adoption of the draft law on the elimination of violence against women will be an additional step forward. However, the delays in forming the Afghan Government have had a negative impact on developing governmental programmes and the delivery and distribution of aid. Lebanon is very concerned by the deterioration of the security situation during the period covered by the report, due to the fact that there were 1,244 incidents, on average, per month, not to mention that there is not much hope of improvement of the security situation now, at the beginning of the year.

Lebanon condemns terrorist attacks against international forces and Afghan forces and civilians, in particular the 28 October attack on United Nations officials. We are also concerned by the continuing growing of opium poppies in a number of regions, according to the report, which is due to instability and lack of security. It is particularly alarming, because the danger of illicit drug trafficking is being exacerbated by its close links with the financing of terrorist acts. The implications of that are tragic for Afghanistan and for the outside world.

We are encouraged by the determination of the United Nations, as highlighted by the Secretary-General, to continue its mission in Afghanistan without being deterred by terrorist acts. We also welcome the measures taken by the Afghan Government and its partners, which are noted in the report, with a view to minimizing the impact of military operations on civilians.

Lebanon calls for continuing reinforcement of the Afghan army and National Police and intensifying local and international efforts to train and to expand the staff of those forces, while giving them the necessary equipment and material to develop their capacity to maintain security and law and order. Lebanon also favours the International Conference on Afghanistan to be held in London in January to reinforce efforts to improve security and to establish civilian institutions and to focus on economic development.

Lebanon would like to emphasize the importance of an integrated approach to the security situation in Afghanistan, as provided for in resolution 1868 (2009), particularly because of the close links between security and stability on the one hand, and the implementation of prosperity and sustainable development, on the other. Military and security operations will not be sufficient in themselves to yield the desired results. Lebanon reaffirms the need to confront the underlying causes of the crisis in Afghanistan and to work towards national reconciliation and to integrate broader categories of the Afghan population into the political process, which, in our view, is central and of utmost priority and importance.

Mr. Barbalić (Bosnia and Herzegovina): The delegation of Bosnia and Herzegovina would like to congratulate you, Sir, on your assumption of the presidency of the Security Council for the month of January. I would like to thank the Secretary-General for his insightful report on the situation in Afghanistan, and Special Representative Kai Eide for his thorough briefing. I wish in particular to thank and to commend the committed personnel of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA), who have recently suffered grievous losses in the performance of their duties. Bosnia and Herzegovina would like to express its deepest sympathies to their families and to their countries.

Bosnia and Herzegovina has aligned itself with the statement of the European Union, in addition to my statement.

Our country deplores the brutal attacks and the current critical security situation in Afghanistan. The increase in both the scale and the scope of the violence since the Secretary-General's last report is alarming. The upsurge in civilian and military casualties and the spread of violence into hitherto peaceful areas are especially worrying. We are aware that this is a critical conjuncture for peace and security in Afghanistan.

Moreover, the flaws of last year's presidential elections provoked grave concern. It is encouraging, however, that that serious matter was also addressed through Afghan institutions. Bosnia and Herzegovina welcomes UNAMA's efforts to strengthen independent Afghan institutions such as the Electoral Complaints Commission. Stemming from our own experience, Bosnia and Herzegovina is of the belief that building such institutions is quintessential for the practice of

democracy. We appreciate the intense diplomatic endeavours that helped resolve an acute political crisis, which resonated well beyond Afghan borders.

In view of the forthcoming parliamentary elections, we believe that holding elections is essential as the ultimate expression of democracy. So too is the probity of the electoral process, which confers legitimacy on the results. Therefore, Bosnia and Herzegovina strongly encourages the Government of Afghanistan and the international community to foresee and forestall weaknesses in that electoral process.

With those considerations in mind, we share with the Secretary-General and his Special Representative a distinct sense of urgency regarding the coordination of the international effort in Afghanistan. We support closer coordination between civilian and military efforts in building peace and security. Bosnia and Herzegovina welcomes the Secretary-General's call to link that coordination effort with the Afghan Government, which will ultimately bear responsibility for peace and security. Therefore we endorse the suggestion of a civilian structure that embraces all stakeholders and is co-chaired by an Afghan minister and the Secretary-General's Special Representative.

In coming months, we look forward to participating in the discussions regarding strengthening of UNAMA.

We concur that the enhancement of Afghan law enforcement and security agencies is vital for the strategy for transition to domestically maintained stability. The projected increase in the training and numbers of police and army personnel is a prerequisite for that transition. It may be further advanced by the Community Defence Initiative's promise of nimble security forces with local knowledge. We believe that the development of a transparent institutional framework to coordinate the security agencies could only increase their effectiveness. For such security reforms to reap their greatest harvest, an Afghan-led national reconciliation process will be significant.

Bosnia and Herzegovina feels particular empathy for the problems faced by the quarter of a million displaced persons inside Afghanistan and for the plight of the refugees who returned in markedly lower numbers in 2009. The solution to their displacement is an integral part of long-term stability for Afghanistan.

Against that sober backdrop, it is important to recognize the positive developments of the last three months. We applaud the draft law on the elimination of violence against women currently under consideration by the parliament. The provincial council elections drew an appreciable turnout, further evincing the Afghan people's strong desire for democracy and peace. An intensive diplomatic effort averted a constitutional crisis, and a busy schedule of meetings in the coming months, including the London Conference, augurs well for the advance of peace and security in Afghanistan. Bosnia and Herzegovina will continue to support such advances with all means at its disposal.

In conclusion, we would like to recognize once more the significance of the work of UNAMA's personnel and would like to stress the vital importance of ensuring their safety. We also thank Mr. Eide for his service and wish him best of luck for the future.

Mr. Ebner (Austria): Mr. President, let me also warmly welcome, on behalf of Austria, the newly elected Security Council members — Bosnia and Herzegovina, Brazil, Gabon, Lebanon and Nigeria — and pay tribute to those countries that completed their term at the end of 2009. I should like to express our appreciation to the Permanent Representative of Burkina Faso, Ambassador Kafando, for the great diplomatic skill with which he presided the Council last month and to congratulate Ambassador Zhang Yesui on the assumption of the presidency for this month.

On the issue of the day — Afghanistan — I wish to thank the Secretary-General and his Special Representative, Mr. Eide, for their statements and for their great personal commitment. Let me also thank the Permanent Representative of Afghanistan, Ambassador Tanin, for his statement.

Austria aligns itself with the statement to be made later in this debate by the European Union (EU) delegation on behalf of the European Union.

When the Council met to discuss the situation in Afghanistan in September 2009, Afghanistan was in the midst of a deep political crisis in the wake of last summer's elections. It is due both to the democratic responsibility displayed by stakeholders in Afghanistan and to the efforts of the international community that the immediate crisis could be overcome. We now need

to refocus attention on the requirements of building a better future for the people of Afghanistan.

At the same time, it must be ensured that last year's course of events does not repeat itself. Lessons need to be learned in order to improve the process for the parliamentary and district council elections scheduled for May this year. The recommendations made by observation missions, such as the EU election observation mission, as well as the findings by the experts of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, should be taken into account. In view of the imminence of the 2010 elections, the final report of the EU mission can provide valuable guidance. It highlights a number of measures that, in the view of the mission's experts, could be implemented within a short time frame in order to address the most urgent concerns.

In order to tackle the many challenges, all political stakeholders in Afghanistan must work together in a constructive spirit for the benefit of the country. We welcome the priorities set out by President Karzai, as well as the commitments made in his inauguration speech last November. That was an important first step towards rebuilding trust and confidence.

A clear agenda and strategies for institution-building and economic development must be developed for the endorsement and support of the international community at the London Conference. A new joint framework for the implementation of the Government's priorities must include concrete benchmarks and timelines. The people of Afghanistan need to see tangible progress soon. That has to include improved governance, accountability and institutional reform, as well as a more effective rule of law, including human rights, particularly women's rights.

Improvements on the ground should be seen to be delivered increasingly by the Afghan authorities and institutions. The Secretary-General's emphasis on capacity-building rather than substituting for local capacity is the right approach in order to enhance Afghan ownership and responsibility. In that respect, we would like to commend the Afghan Independent Human Rights Commission for its efforts in monitoring and implementing human rights throughout Afghanistan.

We agree with the Secretary-General's assessment that there is a need for a reinforced international coordination structure in Afghanistan in order to increase the impact of the peacebuilding and development efforts. The coordination role of the United Nations Mission of Assistance in Afghanistan (UNAMA) will be vital for the success of international civilian activities. Austria therefore fully supports the planned expansion and strengthening of UNAMA, which should further enhance its effectiveness and its ability to operate in the provinces.

The improvement of the security situation in Afghanistan remains one of the biggest challenges. The reported increase in attacks against the aid community is extremely worrying and constitutes a flagrant violation of international law. We are equally concerned over the insurgents' total disregard for the lives of Afghan civilians. International humanitarian and human rights law must be observed by all parties at all times. Violations must be thoroughly investigated and those responsible must be held to account. The new approach of the International Security Assistance Force, which places the protection of the Afghan population as the highest priority and includes a closer operational partnership with the Afghan National Security Forces, has our full support.

We recognize the extremely difficult conditions under which the United Nations is operating in Afghanistan, which were highlighted by the attacks against the United Nations guest house in Kabul last October. We welcome the safety and security measures taken in response to the rising threat against United Nations personnel and premises. At the same time, we fully agree with the Secretary-General that the United Nations cannot and must not be deterred by such acts of violence and needs to carry its important mission forward. I wish to salute here the great courage and commitment of all the United Nations staff operating in Afghanistan.

Afghanistan's current security situation is also closely linked to other factors, as set out in the recent report of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) on addiction, crime and insurgency, which reveals the links between drugs, crime and regional insurgency in Afghanistan. The fight against drugs intensified in 2009, prompted by UNODC's triangular initiative, and opium production could be reduced significantly in certain parts of the country. However, Austria is convinced that in order to further improve the situation and to turn the tide on opium

cultivation in other areas as well, such as Badghis and Kandahar Provinces, our continued support is needed.

In conclusion, let me stress that the current mandate of UNAMA, as defined in resolution 1868 (2009), has been a sound basis for the Mission's work but will have to be refocused in the light of the results of the London and Kabul conferences, as well as through further guidance by the Security Council. We would like also to encourage UNAMA to continue pursuing a results-based approach in its reporting by refining the benchmarks and indicators of progress put forward last September and by adjusting them to the priorities of the new Afghan Government. Our objective must be to facilitate the gradual transfer of authority and responsibility to the Afghan authorities and to assist them in their efforts towards security, stability and prosperity.

Mr. Moungara Moussotsi (Gabon) (*spoke in French*): Allow me first of all to congratulate you, Mr. President, on your assumption of the presidency of the Council for the month of January. I would also like to thank Ambassador Kafando of Burkina Faso for the loyalty and effectiveness with which he guided the Council's work during the month of December 2009.

We appreciate the importance of the task entrusted to Gabon and would like to assure all members of the Security Council of our full readiness to cooperate effectively in the Council's work. Indeed, it is a tremendous privilege for us to take part in the work of the Security Council as one of the non-permanent African members. I therefore take this opportunity to thank all Council members for the very warm welcome extended to our delegation. Our thanks also go to thank the Secretary-General and to the Secretariat team for their availability.

Before turning to the fundamental issues addressed in the report (S/2009/674), I would like to congratulate the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Afghanistan, Mr. Kai Eide, for the very comprehensive presentation of that report.

The situation in Afghanistan is of the greatest concern to my country because of solidarity with the Afghan people, but also owing to its implications for and its impact on international peace and security. We fully support the efforts made by the Afghan Government, with the support of the international community, in the areas of security, particularly the fight against terrorism, and the strengthening of democracy and development in Afghanistan. That active cooperation enabled the Afghan Government to hold presidential elections on 20 August 2009 in a particularly difficult political and security environment.

While it must be recognized that despite all those efforts, the situation on the ground remains of concern, nonetheless the current initiatives for peace and development in Afghanistan bear out our vision of a peaceful and prosperous Afghanistan. The new strategy seeking to reconcile military intervention and development assistance in the country is, in our view, a decisive factor in the stabilization process in Afghanistan.

In fact, the military approach alone is not sufficient. It is essential that it be accompanied by development activities, such as building schools and clinics, agricultural development and the ongoing emancipation of Afghan women. In that regard, my delegation welcomes the decision of the Afghan parliament to endorse the law on the elimination of violence by criminalizing sexual violence. That significant advance deserves the Council's encouragement and the support of the United Nations system, not only to facilitate the adoption of that draft law but also to assure its full implementation.

We welcome the activities of the international community to that end, and in particular the commitment of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan to the country's reconstruction process, despite ongoing threats to the security of its personnel on the ground. We pay tribute here to United Nations personnel and humanitarian workers for their heroic service, sometimes at the risk of their lives.

We urge the international community to continue to support the Afghan Government in its efforts to promote the country's political, economic and sustainable development, with the ultimate goal of allowing Afghan men and women to assume ownership of their destiny and to write with their own hands the pages of Afghanistan's story as a stable and prosperous country.

The International Conference on Afghanistan, to be held at the end of the month in London upon the initiative of France, Germany the United Kingdom, will offer the international community a new opportunity to make a comprehensive assessment of the political, economic, social and humanitarian

situation in Afghanistan. The situation in Afghanistan remains grave and of concern. It goes without saying that greater solidarity in the renewed efforts of the international community will be key to fully restoring stability and security in that country.

Mr. Churkin (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): We thank the Secretary-General for introducing his latest report (S/2009/674) on the situation in Afghanistan. We also thank his Special Representative, Mr. Eide, for his assessments. We commend his work as head of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan and wish him success in his future endeavours.

We share the Secretary-General's view that the complex electoral process in Afghanistan resulted in an important outcome that satisfies the Afghan people themselves and fully meets the requirements of Afghan law. We trust that the formation of a new, effective Government for the country will be completed in accordance with constitutional procedures.

Regrettably, we must note that, in spite of the efforts of the Afghan authorities and the international presences, the security situation continues to deteriorate. Violence has reached unprecedented levels in the country, and the situation in the previously calm northern provinces is worsening. In that connection, it is bewildering that the report makes practically no direct reference to the main source of the threat to the security of Afghanistan and the entire region — the activities of the Taliban and Al-Qaida. We believe that we must dispense with euphemisms in this regard.

We support the goal of national reconciliation in Afghanistan, although that process should not prejudice the achievement of long-term stability in the country or contravene relevant decisions of the Security Council, including with respect to the effective implementation of the Al-Qaida and Taliban sanctions regime. The possibility of reaching agreement with the leaders of the Taliban and other terrorist and extremist organizations cannot be seriously envisaged. Dialogue is possible only with those who have laid down their weapons, recognized the Government and Constitution of Afghanistan, and broken their ties with Al-Qaida and other terrorist structures.

The situation of drug production and trafficking remains of particular concern. The global scale of the Afghan drug threat requires more decisive action and a new level of international cooperation. In that context, we trust that NATO troops in Afghanistan will cooperate more actively with the Afghan Government and establish cooperation with the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO), which has undertaken effective anti-drug operations along the external perimeter of Afghanistan's borders for several years. There is also a need for more resolute action to curb the trade in precursors, which enter Afghanistan from Europe, inter alia, and without which it is impossible to produce heroin.

We believe that the 28 January International Conference on Afghanistan in London will prove to be an important international event and that it will give new impetus to the phased transfer to the Government of Afghanistan of full responsibility for ensuring security throughout the national territory, parallel with the creation of effective Afghan armed forces and police. Russian Minister for Foreign Affairs Sergey Lavrov intends to participate in the Conference.

The broadest possible international cooperation, under United Nations auspices, is needed to address all these challenges. States of the region should also play a positive role, as should organizations active there, including the Shanghai Cooperation Organization and the CSTO, within the framework of which concrete plans for counter-terrorism and counter-narcotics activities have been drawn up and are being carried out alongside development activities in Afghanistan.

Russia will continue to provide Afghanistan with the necessary assistance. Resources are currently allocated to developing the education system in Afghanistan, including rebuilding the Polytechnical University of Kabul. Assistance is also being extended in other forms. Russia recently sent a large shipment of 52 Kamaz trucks to Afghanistan.

Ms. DiCarlo (United States of America): Let me begin by congratulating you, Sir, on assuming the presidency of the Council and assuring you of my delegation's full cooperation. I should also like to congratulate Ambassador Kafando and the delegation of Burkina Faso on their skilful leadership of the Council last month.

My delegation would like to welcome the five new Council members and looks forward to working closely with them in the coming months.

Let me also thank the Secretary-General for his presence and his comments, and Ambassador Tanin of Afghanistan for sharing his Government's perspective with us today.

I would like to offer special thanks to Special Representative Kai Eide, not only for his comprehensive briefing today, but also for his tireless work at the helm of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA). The Special Representative's leadership has been essential to the international community's efforts in Afghanistan. My Government is greatly appreciative of his efforts and his commitment, and wishes him every success in his future endeavours.

This is a crucial moment in Afghanistan. The Government of Afghanistan, together with the Afghan people, is pressing forward on a bold agenda to halt the worrisome deterioration of the past several years. The international community must now act deliberately and urgently to help the Afghan's themselves to turn things around.

The United States commitment to Afghanistan is enduring. Our objective remains unchanged: to disrupt, dismantle and eventually defeat Al-Qaida and to prevent its return to either Afghanistan or Pakistan. Our focus is on building up the capacity of Afghan institutions to withstand and diminish the threat posed by violent extremism.

To achieve that goal, President Obama has ordered an additional 30,000 United States to Afghanistan. Those troops will target the insurgency, secure population centres and train Afghan security forces. Many of the 43 other members of the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) have also announced troop increases. Together, we will partner with Afghan forces so that we can begin transferring security responsibility to the Government of Afghanistan by the summer of 2011.

For truly sustainable progress, our troop increase must be matched by a stronger civilian effort and by additional foreign assistance. Our civilian effort will emphasize the development of more responsive and accountable Afghan institutions at the provincial, district and local levels. We will also encourage and support the Government of Afghanistan's reinvigorated plans to fight corruption, including through concrete measures of progress towards greater accountability.

The United States is substantially increasing the number of its civilian experts in Afghanistan. In fact, we are on track to triple our civilian presence. At the end of January 2009, 320 United States civilians were on the ground; we are to have 920 Americans on the ground this month, and we expect to achieve our target of just under 1,000 civilians shortly thereafter. These civilian experts are partnering with Afghans to enhance the capacity of the country's national and sub-national institutions to govern effectively. United States experts are also working with their Afghan partners to help rehabilitate Afghanistan's key economic sectors so that Afghans themselves can defeat the insurgents, who promise only more violence.

Economic growth is critical to Afghanistan's future, both to undermine extremists' appeal in the short term and to provide sustainable economic development over the long term. To help reverse the Taliban's momentum, we are focusing our reconstruction effort in areas where we can quickly create jobs, especially agricultural ones. Rebuilding Afghanistan's once-vibrant agricultural sector will sap the insurgency not only of foot soldiers but also of income from narcotics. And let me underscore one key element of our political strategy: to support Afghan-led efforts to reintegrate Taliban members who renounce Al-Qaida, lay down their arms and engage in the constitutional political process.

The United Nations, and particularly UNAMA, continues to play a vital role in the international community's civilian efforts in Afghanistan. Its work on institution-building, governance, security sector reform and donor coordination is central to our goal of empowering the Government of Afghanistan. But we must all do a better job of coordinating the international community's efforts to assist the Afghan people. As the Secretary-General notes in his report (S/2009/674), coordinating such a large array of national assistance programmes with the goals identified by the Government of Afghanistan is a substantial undertaking, for which UNAMA needs additional resources and support from Member States. We strongly echo the Secretary-General's call for strengthened coordination, and we support his proposal to bolster UNAMA with experienced staff from key donor countries. For our part, the United States stands ready to support such a request with appropriate United States personnel.

We also see the usefulness of appointing a senior civilian representative within ISAF, as recommended by the Special Representative, to improve the coordination of ISAF's political and development activities, in particular those carried out by provincial reconstruction teams.

The success of UNAMA's mission also depends on its presence throughout the country. In this regard, we note with satisfaction the continued progress in opening UNAMA's regional and provincial offices. We are pleased that the Secretary-General's report affirms that, despite the brutal 28 October attack on the Kabul guest house, the United Nations remains committed to opening additional offices throughout Afghanistan in 2010. We reiterate our support for UNAMA's efforts to strengthen the security of United Nations personnel in Afghanistan, and we are open to working creatively with UNAMA to support those efforts.

The United Nations has played a critical role in supporting the political process in Afghanistan, including support for elections. We agree with the Secretary-General's observation that the 2009 Afghan presidential and provincial council elections exposed serious flaws in the Afghan electoral process. Along with our international partners, we are committed to working with the Government of Afghanistan to address these shortcomings before future elections are held.

The upcoming Conference in London, to be co-chaired by Afghanistan, the United Kingdom and the United Nations, will be an opportunity for the international community to demonstrate its support for the Government of Afghanistan's agenda, as outlined in President Karzai's inaugural address. We look forward to the conference in Kabul this spring, in which the Government of Afghanistan will have the opportunity to present more detailed plans and programmes for achieving its ambitious goals. President Karzai's inaugural speech sent the right message about moving in a new direction, including his commitment to reintegration and reconciliation, to improving relations with Afghanistan's regional partners, and to steadily increasing the responsibilities of Afghan security services. We must now see action, and we must now see progress.

Sir Mark Lyall Grant (United Kingdom): I congratulate you, Sir, on your assumption of the presidency. May I add my voice to others in welcoming five new colleagues to the Security Council; we look forward to working with them over the next two years. And special thanks go to the Secretary-General for his report (S/2009/674) and his comments, to Special Representative Kai Eide for his very informative comments, and also to Ambassador Tanin for his comprehensive comments.

The international community's goal remains a stable and secure Afghanistan that can exercise sovereignty over all of its territory, offer its people representative Government and the conditions for economic prosperity, and play a constructive role in the region. None of us underestimates the scale of this challenge, as the Special Representative set out very clearly earlier. Building a stable and secure Afghanistan will be a long-term task, but the international community is determined to support the Afghan Government in seeing it through. I would like to say a few words first about the forthcoming London Conference before turning to some issues raised in the Secretary-General's latest report.

The London Conference on 28 January will be co-hosted by Prime Minister Gordon Brown, President Karzai and the Secretary-General, and we welcome the Secretary-General's strong support for it. The purpose of the Conference will be to deliver and coordinate international support to enable President Karzai to meet the ambitions that he set out in his recent inauguration speech, and it will focus on three key areas: security, development and governance, and the regional framework and international architecture. The London Conference should be seen as an important step towards the international community's taking a more supportive role in Afghanistan and a further acceleration in the Afghanization of the strategy. In this sense, the London Conference will pave the way for a conference in Kabul later in the spring, at which we hope the Afghan Government will present its commitments to the people of Afghanistan and build on the groundwork laid in London.

I would now like to turn to four issues raised in the Secretary-General's report. First, on aid effectiveness, we strongly agree with the Special Representative that donors need to build rather than substitute for Afghan capacity. We need to see a greater donor willingness to coordinate with the Government of Afghanistan and the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA), rather than operating unilaterally.

Secondly, we strongly support the efforts led by General McChrystal to reduce civilian casualties. We are pleased that the Secretary-General's report highlights this. The report notes that the anti-Government elements were responsible for 78 per cent of civilian casualties, with 54 per cent of those due to suicide and improvised explosive device attacks. The approach of the International Security Assistance Force stands in stark contrast to that of the insurgents, who seek deliberately to target civilians in Afghanistan.

Thirdly, we agree with the Secretary-General about the importance of the Afghan National Army and National Police. Developing the Afghan national security forces in terms both of quality and quantity is key to enabling Afghans to take responsibility for their own security, and we hope that the Joint Coordination and Monitoring Board and London Conference will give impetus to this progress.

Fourthly, the Secretary-General's report highlights the importance of community defence initiatives, and we welcome this emphasis. It is essential that they be given sufficient training to be effective and that they be held accountable. A national security sector strategy would provide a framework for the roles and functions of Afghan security forces, but it needs to be made clear how the community defence initiatives would fit into such a national strategy.

I would also like to raise one issue that is not specifically covered in the Secretary-General's report but was referred to by the Special Representative: corruption, which was an important backdrop to events in 2009. UNAMA, working with others, is helping the Afghan Government to build a capacity to tackle corruption and to build the necessary sustainable institutions to underpin good governance in the longer term, and we strongly welcome this.

No one would deny that Afghanistan has been through another challenging period over the past three months. The presidential election process was not easy, but we look forward to the endorsement of a strong and capable Afghan Government that can take forward the important commitments made by President Karzai in his inauguration address, with the support of the international community and to be confirmed at the London Conference this month.

Finally, I would like to thank Kai Eide for his efforts in Afghanistan over the past two years. His hard work, including delivering elections last year and steering UNAMA through a traumatic period following the attacks on its staff, deserves our admiration, and I would like through him to pay tribute to all of UNAMA's staff as they take forward their important work in extremely difficult circumstances.

In this respect, I was concerned to hear about the challenges he faces in UNAMA's staffing and recruitment. The General Assembly agreed only last month on a significant increase in the budget and staffing of the UNAMA mission, and I hope that the Secretariat will look imaginatively at ways to unblock any impediments at United Nations Headquarters to effectively staffing critical missions around the world, including that of UNAMA in Afghanistan.

Mrs. Viotti (Brazil): I wish to congratulate you, Sir, on your assumption of the presidency of the Council for the month of January. I thank you and other members of the Council for the words of welcome. Brazil looks forward to working very closely and constructively with all Council members in discharging its mandate. I would also like to thank the Secretary-General for being among us this morning, for his remarks and for his latest report on Afghanistan (S/2009/674).

Brazil joins other speakers in thanking Mr. Kai Eide for his enlightening presentation. We take this opportunity to express our appreciation for his work as head of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) and for his invaluable contribution under very challenging circumstances.

Recent months have brought a sobering reminder of the daunting challenges that still lie ahead on the path to peace, stability and prosperity in Afghanistan. The deterioration in the security situation is cause for deep concern. Especially disturbing is the increase in the number of conflict-related civilian casualties. The large majority of those deaths were caused by the Taliban, Al-Qaida and other extremist groups, and the main responsibility should therefore be clearly laid at their feet.

Obviously, that is no consolation for the civilian casualties caused by pro-Government forces in the Afghan conflict, such as the children reportedly killed in Ghazi Khan village and in Lashkar Gah during the last days of 2009. While fully acknowledging the steps taken by the Afghan Government, the International Security Assistance Force and the coalition, we believe

there is a need for continued efforts to better distinguish combatants and non-combatants and eliminate or further reduce risks to civilians. Apart from being a moral imperative and an obligation under international law, protecting civilians is key to strengthening the legitimacy and effectiveness of the international military presence in Afghanistan.

Also worrisome is the fact that extremists have been increasingly targeting international staff and humanitarian agents. The attacks against the United Nations guest house in Kabul last October were particularly shocking. We firmly condemn this senseless and unjustifiable violence and honour its victims. We also pay tribute to the United Nations guards whose heroism helped to save innocent lives. We support the efforts of the Secretary-General to improve the safety of United Nations staff and local personnel in Afghanistan.

The prolonged controversy about the results of last August's polls had an impact on governance in Afghanistan and affected the country's relations with the international community. Electoral irregularities such as those identified by the Electoral Complaints Commission undermined the legitimacy of the electoral process and are readily misused as propaganda tools for extremist groups. They also highlighted the need for reform.

While we ponder the challenges and setbacks in building a safer, more democratic and prosperous Afghanistan and try to learn from past experience, we must also focus on the future. We should all welcome the commitments made by President Karzai in his inauguration speech to enhance efforts towards national unity and reconciliation, increase the responsibility of Afghan forces in providing security to their own people, promote economic development and administrative reforms and take firm measures to fight corruption. We should also ensure that our collective support for President Karzai effectively helps him turn words into deeds.

The appointment of a competent and inclusive Cabinet is a key element in fulfilling those commitments. We encourage the Afghan Government and the Wolesi Jirga to continue working on the formation of the new Government. My delegation also supports President Karzai's initiative to promote national reconciliation, including through talks with the armed opposition.

Another crucial area on which the new Government will certainly want to focus is electoral reform, so as to prevent the recurrence of the problems identified during the 2009 elections. The 2010 elections must contribute to the consolidation of democracy in Afghanistan. We note UNAMA's calls for reform and more transparency in the Independent Electoral Commission ahead of the parliamentary and local elections scheduled for next May and call for increased dialogue between the Afghan Government and the Mission. We encourage further dialogue and cooperation in that regard by all stakeholders.

Continued progress on the promotion and protection of the rights of women is also needed. It would be important for the Afghan parliament to consider in a timely manner the draft law on the elimination of violence against women and the amended Shia personal status law. Matching progress in the legislative area with the strengthening of institutions charged with its implementation is key. A long-term solution for the security situation in Afghanistan requires steady transfer of responsibility to the Afghan Government. That will make possible a gradual withdrawal of the international military presence on the ground and the normalization of life in the country.

The conflict in Afghanistan will not be solved purely on the military front. The convincing argument made by Mr. Eide on the need for a politically driven strategy rather than a militarily driven one should guide our work. Refocusing the Afghanistan National Development Strategy on long-term projects also seems to be the correct approach to follow and may require a stronger role for UNAMA, which we would support.

Improved coordination of the civilian international action in Afghanistan is crucial if both the Government and donors are to achieve greater effectiveness in their actions. In so doing, adequate attention must be given to national ownership so as to ensure the long-term sustainability of international action in the country. We therefore support the initiative of establishing a dedicated civilian coordination structure in Afghanistan under the United Nations umbrella, able to gradually transfer to the Afghan Government the coordination of donor support for its programmes and priorities. To that end, donor countries must find the political readiness indicated in the Secretary-General's report to shift their focus in

Afghanistan from capacity-substitution to capacity-building.

We agree with Mr. Eide's observation that the best contribution the international community can make to assist the Afghan Government and Afghan society is to help them to strengthen institutions. Such a task is complex by definition, but it is the only real option in the long run. In that context, the international conferences to be held on 28 January in London and later this year in Kabul will be important opportunities to advance in that direction.

Mr. Rugunda (Uganda): I congratulate you, Sir, and delegation of China upon your assumption of the presidency of the Council for the month of January and salute Ambassador Kafando and the delegation of Burkina Faso for their leadership of the Council in December. Let me also take this opportunity to welcome the new members of the Council and to wish them success during their tenure.

I thank the Secretary-General for his statement, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General and head of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA), Mr. Kai Eide, for his briefing, and the Permanent Representative of Afghanistan for his statement.

We commend UNAMA for continuing to play an important role in leading international efforts towards security, stability and development in Afghanistan. Afghanistan faces daunting security, political and economic challenges. It is incumbent upon all Afghans, especially the political leaders, to work together towards national unity and reconciliation and to nurture democratic governance, peacebuilding and prosperity.

We welcome the conclusion of the electoral process in Afghanistan, in spite of the flaws and difficulties encountered.

We call upon all political actors to ensure that the approval of the Cabinet is finalized without further delay. The new Government needs to embark on the urgent tasks ahead, including political reform and addressing the root causes of insurgency. It needs to focus with greater impetus on economic recovery, reconstruction, the delivery of services and improving the livelihoods of the people. There is also a need for development partners to work together in a more coordinated and streamlined manner to support the national efforts of the Afghan people. In this regard, we welcome the International Conference on Afghanistan, scheduled for 28 January 2010 in London.

We note with concern that the security situation worsened over the reporting period, with increasing numbers of armed and suicide attacks. This upsurge in violence, which has resulted in more casualties and loss of life, is regrettable and must be brought to an end. My delegation is encouraged by the efforts of the Afghan Government and its international allies to improve the security situation.

It is imperative to build the capacity and capability of the Afghan security institutions, especially the Police and the Army, to take responsibility for the country's long-term stability. We commend the Afghan Government for passing the Counter-Terrorism, Antitrust and Firearms Laws during the reporting period. We also welcome the draft law on the elimination of violence against women and encourage its endorsement by the Afghan Parliament.

We are deeply concerned about attacks targeting United Nations staff in Afghanistan, which have had a negative impact on their ability to carry out their mandate. We call for the enhancement of measures to ensure the safety and security of all UNAMA personnel.

Finally, we commend the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Kai Eide, for his leadership and, through him, thank the UNAMA staff for carrying out their mandate under very difficult circumstances. We wish Mr. Eide success in his future endeavours.

Mr. Araud (France) (*spoke in French*): First of all, I would like to express to the entire Council my best wishes for the new year. Allow me to congratulate you, Mr. President, on your assumption of the presidency of the Security Council. Allow me also to pay tribute, as previous speakers have done, to the outstanding work carried out by Ambassador Michel Kafando and his entire team during the month of December.

With respect to the subject of our debate, I should like, again as previous speakers have done, to pay a wholehearted tribute to the work of Special Representative of the Secretary-General Kai Eide. Thanks to his efforts, the United Nations is now the principal actor in Afghanistan in terms of coordinating international action and dialogue with political actors

and Afghan society. This achievement must be preserved, and its effects should be amplified.

This is a momentous occasion for France. For the first time in the Security Council, the European Union will speak through its delegation to the United Nations. This is the result of the implementation of the Treaty of Lisbon. I therefore welcome that representative. For France, this is an important and a moving moment. France, of course, associates itself with the statement that he will deliver.

I would like to emphasize in particular the main challenges of the year ahead. The most imminent event, as Mr. Kai Eide said, is the London Conference to be held on 28 January 2010. It will be an important step in the process aimed at framing the partnership between Afghanistan and the international community in terms that enable full ownership by the Afghan people of their destiny.

President Karzai made important commitments to reform in his inaugural speech. We hope that the London Conference and the Kabul conference to follow will be opportunities for the Afghan Government to launch its reform programme, in particular in the priority areas of governance, particularly local governance, concerning which Mr. Eide was particularly eloquent; strengthening Afghan civil and security forces; the fight against corruption and drug trafficking; regional cooperation, and the reintegration of combatants.

This programme must be based on more coherent action by the international community. We have been talking about this for years, and I believe that we must at last align our actions with this commonsense objective. The United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) was given a central role in this area by the Security Council. It should have the necessary resources, as well as the authority that is essential to more effective coordination. This will involve strengthening the ties between the United Nations and the other international organizations present in the country, as well as with the main donors.

We therefore support the establishment of a structure that includes the main civilian and military actors in Afghanistan under the co-chairmanship of the Afghan Government and the United Nations. Such a structure, which would meet frequently and at regular intervals, should cover civilian aid, civil-military coordination and regional cooperation. I would stress that this last issue should, in the future, receive increased attention. We hope that, to this end, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General will enhance his efforts for follow-up to and promotion of regional dialogue.

We have taken note of the wish of the Afghan authorities to hold legislative elections in May 2010 in accordance with the timeline set out in the Constitution. This choice is, of course, the sovereign decision of the Afghan authorities alone. However, the lessons of the presidential elections must be heeded, and certain reforms of the electoral system must be carried out ahead of time and in accordance with the Constitution. We must help the Afghan authorities to identify the necessary reforms that have a realistic chance of being carried out before the elections. The Afghans have shown their commitment to democracy, and this commitment should not be betrayed. The next elections should be held in conditions that ensure a free and democratic choice. The fraud witnessed during the presidential elections must not be repeated.

I would like to conclude by assuring the Secretary-General and his Special Representative that we share their concerns about the security of United Nations staff. In Afghanistan, as in other countries in crisis, the necessary means must be dedicated to protecting United Nations personnel. The necessary reinforcement of these means, which should be earmarked for spending in the field as a priority, should be carried out alongside a comprehensive reflection on the future geographical placement of UNAMA installations and deployment of its missions in the light of the new political and security context, which is all too real.

Mr. Takasu (Japan): At the outset, I would like to welcome the five new Council members among us. I would also like to commend you, Sir, and the Chinese delegation on your assumption of the important post of the presidency for the month of January. Allow me also to express our deep gratitude to Ambassador Kafando and his delegation for their excellent work in December.

On the question of Afghanistan, the Secretary-General and his Special Representative, Kai Eide, gave us very useful briefings this morning. Ambassador Tanin also made a contribution to our discussion.

On behalf of my Government, I should like to take this opportunity to commend Mr. Eide on his very

difficult work, especially on the handling of the delicate process of the presidential election in the past few months. I assure Ambassador Eide of our deep appreciation and full support.

There can be no doubt that for those engaged in Afghanistan, including us, last year was the most challenging one since 2001. Exceptional time and energy were spent handling the complicated electoral process. To all of us, the guest house attack in October was a shocking reminder of the treacherous situation on the ground in which men and women are working to implement tasks that we mandated them to do.

Regrettably, it seems as though we have been repeating the same New Year's resolution in the past several years. But it seems to me that this is more serious than the previous two years. This moment at the beginning of 2010 is critical to reversing the negative trends of the previous year and to ensuring future success in Afghanistan. Although the current political situation surrounding the formation of the new Cabinet has been a concern to us, we expect that the new Administration of President Karzai will soon start to work on the reform agenda, nation-building and uniting people.

It should also be noted that all of us in the international community are strengthening assistance for Afghanistan in both the military and the development fields. Japan very much welcomes the new United States strategy announced on 1 December. For its part, Japan announced a new assistance package for Afghanistan of up to appropriately $5 billion over a five-year period beginning in 2009. That package will include assistance for the enhancement of the police force, the reintegration of former insurgents and sustainable and self-reliant development. That announcement was timed to coincide with the completion of the presidential electoral process and five years of President Karzai's presidency, as well as to demonstrate Japan's unchanged support during this challenging period for the people of Afghanistan. We hope that Japan's assistance will provide impetus for further concrete international assistance to the country. But I would also like to emphasize here that it is important not just to make pledges, but also to implement them. The track record in that regard is not necessarily very good. It is time to honour the many pledges that have been made and to accelerate their implementation.

Likewise, we expect the same degree of strong commitment from the Afghanistan Government. We welcome the commitment shown in the inaugural address by President Karzai, including his determination to promote national reconciliation and to fight corruption. I have full confidence that President Karzai's determination will be translated into concrete actions. We will stand by the Afghan Government to assist in that effort. Against that backdrop, the upcoming London Conference will be an opportune occasion to reaffirm the commitment on the part of the new Afghan Government to implement reforms, and on the part of the international community to lend support and provide resources.

Among the most important items on the agenda of the new Afghan Administration will be the reintegration of former insurgents. We should encourage political outreach towards those former insurgents who have forsaken violence and are committed to live peacefully within the framework of the Constitution. In parallel with the military effort to maintain security, a political agenda including reintegration must be pursued to help stability to take root. Let me emphasize that such a plan must be led by the Afghan Government. We are ready to lead international efforts in assistance for reintegration as one of the three pillars of a new strategy, based on our experience in disarmament, demobilization and reintegration efforts and in the disbandment of illegal and armed groups. We hope that the London Conference will add further momentum to consolidate these efforts.

In the past few years, Japan has consistently argued the importance of enhanced aid effectiveness and donor coordination in Afghanistan. However, the situation is far from satisfactory, as Kai Eide has told us. We should definitely do more to avoid waste and enhance impact.

Japan's assistance priorities of agriculture and rural development, infrastructure and basic human needs are in line with the areas that the Afghan Government has prioritized. We concur with the Secretary-General that measures for donor coordination must be taken in partnership with the Afghan Government, with the ultimate goal of Afghanization in mind. The United Nations should play an important role in coordination efforts.

The capacity of the United Nations Assistance Mission (UNAMA) in that regard is important. We should look into concrete measures to improve UNAMA's coordination structures, as well as to expedite the recruitment of experienced staff. I think that it is very clear that we need to streamline recruitment procedures, including broader delegation of authority to UNAMA. At the same time, I stress that effective coordination cannot be achieved without the cooperation of donor countries and their willingness to be coordinated by the United Nations. That is a point that the Secretary-General has emphasized. We need political will at the highest level.

Security is the biggest challenge and prerequisite in all those efforts. We pay a high tribute to troop-contributing countries, many of which have lost precious lives of their personnel. We also commend the Afghan security forces. But it is very clear that much more needs to be done to further strengthen their quality and numbers to ensure long-term stability.

The role of the United Nations has been, and will remain, indispensable in helping to stabilize and reconstruct the country. We pay a high tribute to the continuing courageous work of United Nations staff on the ground. We will continue to support the work of UNAMA to the maximum extent possible. The security of staff is of the utmost concern to us all. We should provide every possible support for additional security measures by the Secretary-General to enable relocated staff to return as early as possible.

In addition, the mandate of UNAMA will be the subject of discussion among us in the coming months to ensure that it meets the expectations of both the Afghan people and the international community. We very much look forward to the Secretary-General's recommendations in his next report.

In conclusion, I reaffirm Japan's strong commitment to helping the Government and people of Afghanistan and to supporting UNAMA. I also wish Turkey well in its role as lead country on Afghanistan.

Mrs. Ogwu (Nigeria): As the representative of one of the newly elected members of the Security Council, let me seize the opportunity provided by this first formal debate of the Council in 2010 to reiterate Nigeria's unwavering commitment to the preservation of international peace and security. I want to assure you, Mr. President, of our solemn obligation to work in concert with other members in the discharge of the daunting responsibilities of the Council.

We congratulate you, Sir, on your assumption of the presidency of the Council for this month and on having convened this important meeting. We also greatly appreciate the presence of Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon in our midst. We commend him especially for his report on the situation in Afghanistan and its implications for international peace and security (S/2009/674). The report contains cogent observations critical to the attainment of peace in the country. We also thank Mr. Kai Eide, Special Representative of the Secretary General for Afghanistan, for his succinct briefing and for the resolute manner in which he discharged the duties of his office. We wish him the best in his future endeavours. We also greatly appreciate the insightful statement of Ambassador Tanin.

Nigeria is concerned that, in spite of intensified global efforts, the challenges in Afghanistan, in particular the security challenges, remain intractable. The Secretary-General's report notes the deteriorating security situation in the country and the expansion of the insurgency, including suicide bombings, rising conflict-related civilian casualties and escalating threats to United Nations and international aid personnel. This deplorable situation constricts not only aid delivery around the country but also the efforts of the Government to deliver basic services to the people. The situation is exacerbated by existing and new political challenges, as well as severe economic stagnation.

In spite of these challenges, we appreciate the resilience and commitment of the Afghan people to democratic governance. We also appreciate the roles played by the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) and by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General in the successful resolution of the political crisis following the elections.

Nigeria believes that the new Afghan Government deserves support to strengthen and consolidate its capacity to deliver basic services, maintain domestic peace and security, facilitate an inclusive process of dialogue and national reconciliation and fortify its relationship with its neighbours. Indeed, the rule of law and a vibrant political process capable of supporting national

reconciliation are prerequisites for the gradual return of peace and stability to the country. The international community must augment its investment in these areas. That is why we welcome the London Conference scheduled for 28 January 2010 and the subsequent Kabul conference, in the hope that both conferences will help to galvanize international resources and support for the country. The task for the international community is to ensure that progress is effectively monitored.

To reverse the deteriorating security situation in the country will require the consolidation of existing security mechanisms and the adoption of fresh initiatives, including the proposal to use local security agents under the Community Defence Initiative, and security sector reform. We share the Secretary-General's view that this combination of measures must be underpinned by national reconciliation and good governance. In addition, there must be sustained cooperation between local security forces and their international counterparts. Meanwhile, we urge greater protection for United Nations personnel and aid workers and for Afghan civilians.

Nigeria is mindful that electoral contests have increasingly constituted a major challenge to the security and stability of emerging democracies. We therefore welcome the proposal for electoral reforms in Afghanistan. The reform should be a measure to reinforce the country's nascent democracy and should constitute the foundation for sustainable political development in the country. In effect, the focus of the reform should be to bolster the electoral process, to sustain continuous electoral exercises and to guide meaningful political relationships. In this regard, the Electoral Complaints Commission and the Independent Electoral Commission should be reformed to conform to international best practices by being truly independent and free of partisan bias and control. The reform should be all-encompassing, affecting all levels of government and involving all the stakeholders in Afghan society. We urge the country's political actors to understand and defend the electoral process and also to approach the political system with a sense of compromise and reconciliation.

In the final analysis, under the rubric of lesson learned, it is important to make public the recommendations of the ongoing investigations into the electoral irregularities in the country, as a means of forestalling future occurrences.

Nigeria supports the need for the international community, within a framework of a strategy of transition, to reinforce the coordination structure in Afghanistan, under a United Nations umbrella. We appreciate the central role which UNAMA plays in these efforts and we hope that the full implementation of its 2010 budget, as approved, will help to strengthen the Mission. We appreciate the contributions of Afghanistan's neighbours to the efforts to tackle the challenges confronting the country and urge international support for sustained regional engagement.

Mr. Puente (Mexico) (*spoke in Spanish*): Let me begin by congratulating you, Sir, on your assumption of the presidency of the Security Council for this month. I assure you once again of my delegation's support as you guide the work of the Council to success. My thanks go also to the delegation of Burkina Faso for its successful presidency last month. I join in thanking the delegations which have just completed their term on the Security Council for their great contributions to the Council. I also welcome the five new non-permanent members.

I also join others in thanking the Secretary-General and his Special Representative for their comments and for their valuable reports. We appreciate the work done by Mr. Kai Eide over the past two years in the face of the challenges his Office has confronted in the effort to achieve development in Afghanistan; he has done a good job of meeting those challenges. We wish him the best in his future endeavours.

As a new year begins, my delegation notes with concern that old challenges in the areas of security, human rights, strengthening the rule of law and institution-building continue to be obstacles to stability and progress in Afghanistan. Along with these, new challenges have arisen as a result of major events in the final months of 2009 relating to a political and electoral process that was under the cloud of irregularities, as well as to the precarious security situation, which obliged the United Nations itself to reformulate its strategy in the field in order to protect its personnel.

In such circumstances, strengthened coordination and support from the international community to ensure stability in Afghanistan are clearly necessary. The establishment of a coordination mechanism within the framework of a transition strategy, under a United

Nations umbrella, is of key importance in mobilizing the resources needed for programmes in support of the country's security forces and civil institutions and, hence, its economic development.

We hope that the London Conference planned for 28 January and the subsequent Kabul conference, which will analyse new security and development strategies, will help buttress that proposal on the basis of a clear definition of the roles that the Afghan Government and the international community must play, as noted by the Permanent Representative of Afghanistan.

The electoral process was a watershed in the international community's support. It revealed the weakness of Afghan institutions. In that situation, the Government of Afghanistan is now facing the difficult task of enhancing the credibility of its actions among a sceptical population, through a renewed political pact, as rightly suggested by the Secretary-General. My delegation agrees with the Secretary-General that the recently elected Government should redouble its efforts to make good on the commitments it entered into on the basis of priorities established by President Karzai. These relate directly to goals such as fighting corruption and impunity in the country. It is clear that rapid and determined action against those evils will enhance the Government's authority and generate trust among the population, thus strengthening the Government's position with respect to insurgent activities.

The endeavours of Government bodies will have a key role to play in furthering the interests of the Afghan people. We therefore believe it to be of fundamental importance that institutional unity be maintained. We hope that the appointment of new members of President Karzai's Cabinet will be another step towards the strengthened confidence and unity that are so necessary. We encourage the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) and other United Nations entities in the field to support the Afghan Government, with a view to reaching that goal, which will enable the Government to strengthen its institutions and extend its authority within the country.

With regard to security, the figures in the report we are considering today (S/2009/674) cause concern. They reflect a considerable increase in violent incidents compared to past years. Certainly those figures show that insecurity continues to be the main factor affecting progress in Afghanistan. While we support the efforts to address that situation, we reiterate our conviction that such actions should go hand in hand with parallel measures to promote development, respect for human rights and the strengthening of the rule of law, thus tackling the root causes of the insecurity.

Furthermore, my delegation regrets that as a direct consequence of the insecurity and the political instability in Afghanistan, attacks against humanitarian and United Nations personnel continue, restricting and threatening their commendable and valuable work.

The Security Council and the Organization as a whole must deploy all their forces when it comes to protecting the Organization's own personnel. Thus we support all efforts of the Secretary-General to review the security mechanisms in order to protect the personnel deployed in the field, and we reiterate the obligation of the parties to comply with resolution 1502 (2003), on the security and protection of humanitarian and United Nations personnel, promoted by my delegation during its earlier participation in the Security Council. In that regard, it is essential to eliminate the threat of terrorism, while respecting human rights in those efforts.

To conclude, I would like to note that my delegation believes that President Karzai and the Afghan authorities have before them an inescapable commitment to themselves and to the international community. That is why we reiterate our support for any efforts both by President Karzai and by his country's political class to foster an environment of reconciliation and security and to resolutely address the main challenges afflicting the country.

We are confident that the international presence in Afghanistan, together with the support and leadership of the United Nations, will help to establish the conditions that Afghanistan needs to exercise fully its national capacities and responsibilities as a sovereign State.

The President (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): I shall now make a brief statement in my capacity as the representative of China.

We would like to congratulate the Afghan people on the election of their new national leader. China hopes that the new Afghan Government can be established and carry out its functions as soon as

possible. We support the Afghan Government's efforts to bring stability to the country. We hope that the international community will further increase its efforts to actively assist the Government in strengthening the capacity-building of the army and the police so as to enable them to assume the responsibility for security at an early date.

We support the Afghan Government and people in their efforts to promote steady social and economic development and to improve people's livelihoods, and we call on the international community to provide more support and assistance in view of the country's development needs. We hope that the international conferences on Afghanistan, to be held in Istanbul, London and Kabul, will achieve positive and concrete results.

I now resume my functions as President of the Council.

I give the floor to the representative of Canada.

Mr. McNee (Canada): I would like to congratulate you, Mr. President, as your assumption of the presidency of the Council this month and also the new members of the Council: Bosnia and Herzegovina, Brazil, Gabon, Lebanon and Nigeria.

The New Year coincides with a new beginning for Afghanistan. The past year has seen many successes but also challenges. We also note with great sadness the continued violence all over Afghanistan, including in Kabul, as insurgents have attempted to strike at the heart of Afghan and international efforts to rebuild the country. My delegation offers our deep condolences to the families of all Afghans, as well as to those of the civilians and soldiers from many Member States represented here today who have lost their lives or been injured in the violence in Afghanistan.

As the Secretary-General notes in his very useful report (S/2009/674), while the election process revealed that substantial work remains to be done, we must not ignore the successes that have been achieved to date, including the fact that significant numbers of Afghans turned out to vote despite violence and intimidation. While there was widespread fraud, it was detected and addressed, and now a new Government is being formed with a set of clear priorities for the road ahead.

President Karzai has made important commitments to building a stable, democratic Afghanistan, but major challenges lie ahead. Immediate action must be taken to address corruption at all levels and to continue to reform the judicial system. Continued progress on security, strong accountable national institutions, basic services and economic development for the Afghan people must be delivered. It is also clear that significant reforms to the electoral system are required so that future elections can be more transparent and accountable. Canada remains ready to assist, while noting that it is the responsibility of the new Afghan Government to demonstrate leadership on those priorities.

In that context, Canada recognizes the democratic process that is taking place in the nomination and confirmation of the new cabinet, a process that is enshrined in the Afghan Constitution. We encourage all parties to work towards a quick resolution in order for the Government of Afghanistan to move forward on the significant challenges facing Afghans.

Looking ahead, strengthening Afghan ownership will be the key to success. Canada recognizes that all our collective efforts must enhance the capacity of Afghans to take increasing responsibility in managing the affairs of their country, from security and governance to basic services. Over the coming months President Karzai and his Government must establish a contract with the Afghan people aimed at building a relationship of trust. Canada looks forward to seeing the building blocks of that contract articulated during the upcoming conferences in London and Kabul, clearly outlining its plans for the way ahead.

The variety of international meetings and conferences on Afghanistan planned over the coming months is indicative of the urgency and seriousness with which the international community, including my country, wants to support progress in Afghanistan. Those conferences are a chance for the Government of Afghanistan and the international community to work together with renewed vigour to address the many challenges faced by Afghanistan. We trust that the 28 January conference in London, followed by a spring conference in Kabul, will give the international community the opportunity to direct its efforts to a well-defined set of realistic and prioritized objectives set by the Afghan Government and to develop a new international architecture for engagement in Afghanistan.

The international effort in Afghanistan has been boosted by the recent announcement by the United States of important measures to reinforce its engagement, including the deployment of additional military and civilian resources. Canada welcomes those additional resources, particularly to the south of Afghanistan, where they will help provide a more secure environment for the Afghan people.

Coordination of international engagement in Afghanistan to achieve our shared goal presents many challenges, not least of which are the sheer number of actors and the complexity of the issues. It is thus all the more crucial, as we strengthen coordination structures, that consistency be ensured in the international community's approach to helping the Afghan Government to rebuild Afghanistan.

(*spoke in French*)

In that context, Canada firmly believes that the United Nations role as coordinator of civilian efforts in Afghanistan should be maintained and strengthened. In that regard, we support the efforts to strengthen the capacity of the United Nations Mission of Assistance in Afghanistan (UNAMA) to implement its mandate and to maintain a continuous leadership presence on the ground. Canada is also supportive of a strengthened NATO senior civilian representative to coordinate the civilian contribution to counter insurgency, noting that UNAMA and NATO must work hand in glove to help ensure the synergy of international efforts.

A more focused and better coordinated international effort, within the framework of a transition strategy, is paramount to success. This coordinated effort will bear fruit, however, only if the focus is on advancing Afghan capacity to lead on the key priorities moving forward. Canada shares the view of the United Nations and our allies that we must not lose sight of the necessity to leave the governing of Afghanistan in the hands of a capable and effective Afghan Government.

Finally, I would like to express the Government of Canada's appreciation for the work of Special Representative of the Secretary-General Kai Eide, whose term is ending soon. Since his appointment two years ago, Kai Eide has worked tirelessly to advance the international community's objectives in Afghanistan, and Canada appreciates the energy and commitment he has brought to the task.

We note with deep appreciation the fact that he has worked hard to strengthen UNAMA by greatly expanding its resources and its presence in the provinces; to build UNAMA's coordination capacity as well as to strengthen and reform the Joint Coordination and Monitoring Board; to prepare the ground for much closer cooperation between the International Security Assistance Force and the United Nations; and to play a key political role in shaping international conferences in Afghanistan and elsewhere at key times, such as the recent elections. While much remains to be done in Afghanistan, Mr. Eide deserves our heartfelt thanks for his accomplishments and dedication.

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): I give the floor to the representative of New Zealand.

Mr. McLay (New Zealand): New Zealand appreciates the opportunity to contribute to this important and timely discussion, and takes this opportunity to congratulate you, Sir, on assuming the presidency of the Council, as well as the new members of the Council.

We thank the Secretary-General for his latest report (S/2009/674) and Special Representative Kai Eide for his work, for this morning's briefing and, above all, for the role he has played. We wish him well.

While the report is sobering and raises many matters of real concern, we agree that the key priorities must be a more focused and better coordinated international effort, as well as reform of the Afghan electoral process and Government. We affirm that the United Nations has a critical role to play in Afghanistan, and will continue to support that role.

Last year, New Zealand reviewed its participation in Afghanistan and reconfirmed its commitment to the provincial reconstruction team that has led work in Bamyan province since 2003. We have also redeployed our Special Forces to Afghanistan during the period President Obama has identified as critical to defeating the insurgency. New Zealand welcomed the 1 December statement by President Obama, given its emphasis on a coherent and credible pathway forward in Afghanistan. We particularly welcome his focus on increased short-term military capacity to improve stability and security, and enhancing the capacity of the Afghan National Army and Police to assume primary security responsibility.

Mindful that the Secretary-General's report calls for a "change of mindset in the international community as well as in the Government of Afghanistan" (*S/2009/674, para. 50*), we also support President Obama's sense of urgency about transferring that security responsibility to local forces and on shifting the focus of international efforts to building civilian capacities that will put Afghanistan on a peaceful development path. Without those commitments, there can be no realistic way forward.

For its part, New Zealand is stepping up its capacity-building with the Afghan National Police in Bamyan, preparing a pathway for the civilianization of our provincial reconstruction teams, and increasing its official development assistance budget to underpin those changes. We are establishing an embassy and appointing an ambassador in Kabul to coordinate our efforts with those of our partners including, most importantly, the Afghans themselves, so that when international troops are drawn down, they leave behind a country capable of managing its own security and the increased humanitarian assistance that nations such as ours have signalled their readiness to provide.

All that represents a significant commitment for a small country with limited military and other resources. It is a commitment made for good reason to the people of Afghanistan, but it is also a commitment made in expectation of a meaningful effort and response from President Karzai and his new Administration, when it can be finally formed.

Nothing should disguise the challenge they face. While we welcomed the fact that elections were held, doubts about the probity of the results and the lack of progress around institution-building, and concerns as to the true depth of the Administration's commitment to anti-corruption measures have sorely tested the capacities of contributing nations to maintain or enhance their contributions. We strongly encourage President Karzai to move quickly to address the deep-seated security, governance, corruption, human rights, justice and narcotics challenges facing Afghanistan — all identified in today's report.

It is imperative that the Government deliver tangible improvements to the daily lives of ordinary Afghans. In so doing, it will have the support of the international community, but those who put their military in harm's way in the interests of Afghanistan and its people are entitled to see better progress on corruption and governance.

While we strongly support efforts to build a new and peaceful Afghanistan, we look to the Karzai Administration to meet the obligations it has now incurred to the international community. We therefore welcome Britain's lead in coordinating international support through a Conference later this month. We will attend at the ministerial level, and hope that we quickly reach the stage where meetings to discuss Afghanistan's future can be held regularly in Afghanistan itself. We therefore welcome the fact that the second meeting is to be held in Kabul.

As the Secretary-General's report emphasizes, there is an urgent need to improve governance and give greater confidence to ordinary Afghans that their Administration is working for them, not least in stamping out corruption. The extent of corruption outlined in the report makes it clear that the Administration must address this in all forms and at all levels. For all those who abuse the system, there must be no sanctuaries, no safe havens and no impunity.

We want Afghanistan, its people and its Administration to succeed in their endeavours. They have our good wishes, our blessings and our active commitment. We know they need time and space to rebuild their country, and our contribution is to help provide that. The people who showed their support for democracy in the recent elections, sometimes at great risk, are entitled to see greater probity and better governance as a result. But the military and civilians who risk their lives to work in Afghanistan for this United Nations, for civil society and in provincial reconstruction teams — all to help Afghanistan and its people — are also entitled to see better progress on addressing corruption and governance issues. It is for the Government and people of Afghanistan to decide for themselves how best they should do that, but doing it is the nub of the matter as we see it.

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): I give the floor to the representative of Australia.

Mr. Windsor (Australia): On behalf of Australia, I would like to congratulate China on assuming the presidency of the Council for this month. I would also like to congratulate Bosnia and Herzegovina, Brazil, Gabon, Lebanon and Nigeria on taking up their vital duties as elected members of this important body.

As the Secretary-General said, and as Australia fully agrees, we are now at a critical juncture in Afghanistan. What we need now is unity of effort, greater attention to key priorities, and a new mindset on the part of the international community and the Government of Afghanistan. This imperative is increasingly being recognized both in Afghanistan and internationally. It is, of course, reflected in the renewed commitment to an effective strategy articulated by United States President Obama and by the International Security and Assistance Force (ISAF) late last year, and in the ongoing work that the international community and the Afghan Government are doing together to redefine their partnership so as to better meet the pressing needs of the Afghan people.

The security situation inside Afghanistan undoubtedly remains difficult and dangerous. The levels of violence will likely increase further in the coming year as the insurgency comes under increased pressure from Afghan and ISAF operations. Recent attacks, such as those in Khost and Kandahar — for which we offer our condolences to all those affected — are a reminder of the ongoing human cost of our necessary efforts to build security and stability.

Australia has boosted its contribution to the critical task of strengthening the Afghan security capacity as a key focus of efforts to deny terrorists safe haven in Afghanistan. We are committed to training the Afghan National Army to a point at which it can take on security in Uruzgan province, where our troops have been serving alongside the Dutch, who have led capably in that province for the last four years. Australian police have also expanded their efforts to train and advise Afghan police, including in Uruzgan province. We will continue to expand our contribution on the civilian side, with a particular emphasis on building the capacity of the Afghan authorities to deliver more effective governance and basic services.

We thank the Secretary-General for his report (S/2009/674) and his statement here today, and Special Representative Kai Eide for his presentation. I join those who have praised his leadership and the work he and his staff have done under incredibly difficult circumstances, as we all know. We, too, welcome President Karzai's commitment to action that he set out in his inauguration speech. The timely finalization of a credible and competent new Cabinet will be an important initial step towards ensuring that the new Afghan Government realizes early, demonstrable progress on its key priorities — improving governance, including at local levels, addressing corruption, delivering basic services, making progress with reintegration and reconciliation efforts, and strengthening the Afghan National Army and Police.

We agree with the Secretary-General's report that the problems associated with the 2009 presidential election very much demonstrate the need for the reform of some key aspects of the electoral system. Lessons need to be learned and shortcomings rectified, in particular before the next parliamentary elections, in order to secure Afghan and international support for democratic processes in Afghanistan.

We all need to lift our game. Increased efforts on the civilian side need to be well targeted and better coordinated. The United Nations has an indispensable role to play, and it can be further strengthened, but other key players, including ISAF, also have an important contribution to make to the improved coordination of civilian effort. These international coordination mechanisms have to ensure that the necessary coordination actually happens in a regular, effective and efficient manner and at all the levels it needs to be to ensure there is an actual outcome on the ground.

The actual mission strength of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) remains a concern. We, too, were pleased to support the enhanced package for UNAMA at the end of the year. But if it would assist the Mission, we should look at flexible arrangements, such as providing secondees or liaison officers to make sure that the job required is actually done. UNAMA's security needs also have to be kept very clearly in mind if it is to continue to play its indispensable role throughout the country.

Australia stands ready to work with the new Afghan Government and the international community. We look forward to the London Conference, and to the subsequent one in Kabul in the spring, as a basis for a renewed partnership between the Afghan Government and the international community, and a renewed commitment between the Afghan Government and its people. We must all remain committed to this vitally important effort to reclaim Afghanistan from violence and extremism. Afghanistan has endured so much for so long. We had a very difficult year last year together, and we have an equally difficult one ahead. With the

right commitment and unity of purpose, we can provide a better future in the years ahead.

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): I call on the representative of Pakistan.

Mr. Haroon (Pakistan): May I congratulate you, Mr. President, on assuming the presidency for this month, representing a major Power in the area.

I would like to thank the Secretary-General and Kai Eide for the briefings given this morning in this Chamber. Specifically, my delegation would like to thank you for convening this important meeting on the situation in Afghanistan. Today's meeting provides a timely opportunity to review the overall situation in Afghanistan, a country steeped in blood where geography jostles with ethnology and strategy with history, especially in the context of President Karzai's success in the recent Afghan elections and the Security Council's forthcoming consideration of the mandate of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA), due to expire in March 2010.

Pakistan, as one may well imagine, has a vital stake in the peace, stability and economic development of Afghanistan. In human conflict, no neighbour, no other country has suffered more than Pakistan from the consequences of conflict and human tragedy in Afghanistan. But the people of Pakistan share these sorrows of their Afghan brethren. In their prosperity we see our prosperity; in their progress, we see our progress; and in their woes, we see our woes.

We value the Secretary-General's latest report (S/2009/674) on the situation in Afghanistan. It provides useful information on the Afghan electoral process and the difficulties encountered in that regard; the nature and complexity of the security situation in Afghanistan; and aid effectiveness, donor coordination and development.

The insecurity driven by the political-economic insurgency and its exploitation by criminals and drug traffickers are the main factors impeding progress in Afghanistan. This insurgency needs to be eliminated as a priority, without externalizing the problem. By externalizing the problem, as Sir Henry Durand commented wryly more than a century ago, "these instructions from afar are a phantasm of remote danger that tend to warp judgement". This is an issue linked to the inadequate capacity to enforce law in the treacherous landscape of Afghanistan.

We agree with the Secretary-General that we must resolve to implement

> "a political reform that addresses the root causes of the insurgency, including through efforts aimed at improving governance and an Afghan-led political process to re-establish peace" (*S/2009/674, para. 25*).

Outsiders, as former British Prime Minister Disraeli predicted to the House of Lords, can only be bogged down in financial convulsions while the war in Afghanistan would exhaust the resources of any country. And I think we should remember that as a lesson.

We have always believed that peace and economic development in Afghanistan can be brought about only by a stable Government in Kabul, enjoying the majority support of the Afghan people. The presidential and provincial council elections held last year showed the commitment of the Afghan people to democracy and the rule of law. The Government of Pakistan extends its full support to President Karzai's agenda and road map, as articulated in his inaugural speech.

Pakistan acknowledges the role of the United Nations in Afghanistan, particularly that of UNAMA, ably led by the Secretary-General's Special Representative. Security Council resolutions 1806 (2008) and 1868 (2009) clearly lay down UNAMA's strengthened and expanded presence throughout the country and outline its central role in aid coordination, providing political outreach and promoting implementation of the Afghanistan National Development Strategy. Resolution 1868 (2009) specifically spells out expansion of UNAMA's activities and programmes at the provincial level.

Accordingly, UNAMA plans to open new provincial offices in 2010. We have supported the budget proposals that entail such expansion, including the Secretary-General's request for the immediate use of $7.9 million for security requirements. The United Nations has an important responsibility in coordinating a comprehensive international effort in Afghanistan.

Pakistan is further committed to strengthening our friendly bilateral ties with Afghanistan, in the spirit of the joint declaration on the directions of bilateral cooperation, signed by our two Presidents in 2009. Our assistance package for Afghanistan is the biggest

cooperation programme Pakistan has had with any country. We have elaborate human resources development programmes in various fields for our Afghan friends. Afghanistan is also our third largest trading partner and is soon likely to become the second largest partner.

We are also engaged in security and intelligence cooperation with Afghanistan, including through the Tripartite Commission, which also includes the United States and the International Security Assistance Force. The last highest-level meeting of the Commission, held on 29 December, reviewed the overall coordination in the security area specifically. We are also looking forward to constructively participating in the meetings being organized by the Turkish Government in Istanbul during the last week of this month and in the London Conference on Afghanistan to be held on 28 January 2010.

But let us signal a cautionary note. As Lord Curzon, Viceroy of India, said, anyone who has read the history of the area will not prophesy the future. Suddenly the status quo changes. Whether it be 100 years ago or the Mad Mullah of Swat or the Mullah of Pawinda — also emulated recently — you suddenly see them lead thousands of Lashkars down the mountain. Prior to the first Afghan war, McNaughton signalled the Governor in Calcutta, "All is well"; he was murdered the next day. In the period of the second Afghan war, Cavagnari cabled the same to Delhi; he was also killed the next day. And when Commissioner Undy in Peshawar spoke of the calm, tribal Afridi Lashkars came out of nowhere to attack Peshawar. This is Afghanistan.

We are committed to a voluntary, gradual, safe and dignified return of the over 3 million refugees that still live with us in Pakistan, but there is a need for more diligent and sustained efforts at creating necessary pull factors in Afghanistan. We would stress the need for strengthening reintegration programmes for these refugees within Afghanistan's development strategy. We expect the United Nations and the international community to be more forthcoming in assisting in this endeavour with the necessary resources.

The international community is nearing completion of a decade of engagement with Afghanistan. That calls for introspection and a genuine reappraisal of achievements and failures. There is no doubt that Afghanistan stills needs international assistance through sustained, pragmatic and prudent engagement. Non-intervention and non-interference in the internal affairs of Afghanistan must however be a cardinal element of this engagement. No regional or extra-regional State should be allowed to manipulate the situation. The long-term objectives of peace, stability and development in Afghanistan can be realized only by respecting its sovereignty, independence, unity and territorial integrity.

In 1907, two empires met and signed the Saint Petersburg Convention; both are now sitting in the Security Council. Russia agreed to channel its foreign policy on Afghanistan through Whitehall, and the British agreed not to invade, annex or occupy any part of Afghanistan, having just ceded the territories of Kandahar and Herat to Amir Abdur Rahman Khan. There is a lesson of history in this pax. Let us hope that this Council is listening.

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): I now give the floor to the representative of Norway.

Mrs. Juul (Norway): Let me start by emphasizing that the international community has a common desire for improved security, political stability and development for the people of Afghanistan. We all share that goal, and we also agree that a joint political strategy is the only way to bring about a sustainable peace in Afghanistan.

Unfortunately, through the years since the Bonn Agreement, we have witnessed, in efforts by the international community, a lack of unity on how to reach a sustainable political solution in Afghanistan. This fragile situation cannot be allowed to continue. There is thus an urgent need for concerted action to focus on joint priorities under Afghan leadership and to coordinate in a way that empowers Afghan institutions. There needs to be a gradual and responsible transfer of authority to the Afghan Government.

The aim of our joint efforts should be to enable Afghans to fulfil their responsibility to manage Afghan institutions and national programmes in a transparent and competent manner. Enhanced international coordination should produce focused priorities, better delivery in line with Afghan priorities, and more accountability to both the international community and the Afghan authorities.

It is necessary to ask how we and the Afghan Government should set our priorities and where we can improve our performance. Succeeding in Afghanistan will depend on our ability to improve and strengthen our capacity to coordinate international civilian and political efforts. The United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) plays a key role in finding constructive answers to these questions. To maintain both legitimacy and broad international support, it is vital that the United Nations play the leading role in coordinating all political and international civilian support to Afghanistan. All major donors should also step up international coordination and accept being coordinated under the primacy of the United Nations, in order to avoid duplication or fragmentation and to strengthen Afghan capacity.

At the same time, we need to recognize that the political mandate of the United Nations should be better combined with the role of coordinating international development assistance. The UNAMA mandate to be renewed in March needs to cover the relationship between UNAMA and the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) and their coordination functions. ISAF needs to strengthen its capacity and competency in civilian assistance to ensure more effective delivery of provincial reconstruction team assistance aligned with Afghan priorities. But the overall civilian coordination needs to lie with UNAMA. UNAMA should also be granted a more independent role with regard to developing a political strategy. Such a strategy is critical in providing guidance for the military efforts. UNAMA also needs to focus more of its work on rule of law, human rights and transitional justice.

UNAMA's ability to deliver optimally requires resources, qualified personnel and a more conducive security environment. We are very pleased that the key role played by UNAMA in Afghanistan is reflected in the significant increase in the Mission's budget for 2010. Only with a sufficient level of predictable funding will UNAMA be able to implement its mandate effectively. We therefore welcome the approval of the UNAMA budget in the Fifth Committee, but call on the United Nations Secretariat and UNAMA to provide for concrete measures that can be implemented to speed up the recruitment and deployment of personnel to Afghanistan. It is critical that UNAMA become fully staffed without delay. It is also important that the enhanced UNAMA field offices get a clearer mandate that is based on best practices and lessons learned. The Mission's presence should also correspond with where UNAMA can add the most value. Norway also welcomes the additional budgetary allocation for ensuring the security of United Nations staff.

The past few months have been difficult ones for all who have been engaged in Afghanistan, but especially hard for the United Nations. UNAMA and its staff face difficult and often dangerous circumstances. We commend their courage and dedication in risking their lives as they work for a better and more peaceful Afghanistan.

As this is the last briefing by Special Representative of the Secretary-General Kai Eide in the Council, we would also like to express our deep appreciation for his dedicated leadership over the past two years and for his principled commitment through a difficult period.

The Afghan presidential election and its aftermath last year illustrated clearly how challenging it can be to conduct elections in conflict-affected areas. The controversy of the 2009 elections undermined confidence in Afghan leadership and affected negatively the international engagement in Afghanistan, though the result was acceptable to Afghans and respected Afghan laws and institutions.

The result of the elections last year confirmed the fact that Afghan institutions are weak and fragile. Serious flaws and weaknesses in the Afghan electoral institutions need to be corrected before we can engage in similar support to parliamentary elections this year. We need to see progress and reforms that can prevent fraud from taking place.

It is not only the Afghan people but also the international community that have expectations and demands. As stated by President Karzai in his inaugural speech on 19 November, the new Afghan Government will have to commit itself on a larger scale and take all necessary measures to combat corruption and the culture of impunity, improve governance — in particular at the local level and including the rule of law — protect human rights and women's rights, and improve the security situation and its capacity to deliver basic services to the Afghan people.

As members of the international community, we must stand ready to assist the next Afghan Government in meeting these demanding commitments to the people of Afghanistan. Norway looks forward to the London Conference, where the partnership between the Afghan Government and the international community will be renewed and key actions of the new Afghan Government will be endorsed. This will be an important road map to the next Afghan-led conference in Kabul, expected to be held later this year. Norway welcomes the focus on transition within the military and civilian sector in order for the Afghan people to assume more responsibility for their own country.

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): I now give the floor to Mr. Hans-Peter Schwaiger, acting head of the delegation of the European Union to the United Nations.

Mr. Schwaiger: We would like to congratulate you, Mr. President, on your assumption of the presidency of the Security Council at the beginning of 2010. We would also like to congratulate the five newly elected members of the Security Council.

I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union (EU) in accordance with the new arrangements for external representation of the Union under the Treaty of Lisbon. In this respect, it is a very special and, as the French representative said, a very moving moment for the European Union.

The candidate country Croatia; the countries of the Stabilisation and Association process and potential candidates Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro and Serbia; and the Republic of Moldova and Georgia, align themselves with this declaration.

Allow me to begin by expressing our appreciation for the opportunity to participate in today's debate. Like other speakers before me, I would especially like to thank Mr. Kai Eide, Special Representative of the Secretary-General, for his comprehensive briefing, his excellent work in the past and his ongoing work in leading the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA). We also want to wish him all the best in his future endeavours.

The European Union welcomes the conclusion of the presidential electoral process and congratulates President Hâmid Karzai on assuming office for a second consecutive term. The EU wishes to underline its readiness to support President Karzai and the future Afghan Government in the implementation of the commitments made to the Afghan people in his inaugural speech, namely, in the five key areas of peace and reconciliation, security, good governance, economic development and regional cooperation. This will require close and strategic coordination of the international efforts under the lead of UNAMA.

The European Union takes note of the announcement by the Independent Electoral Commission that the parliamentary elections will take place in May 2010. It also underlines the need for urgent reform of the electoral system, including a review of the appointment mechanism of the commissioners of the Independent Electoral Commission to ensure its impartiality, as recommended in the final reports and findings of the EU Election Observation Mission and other observations groups on the presidential and provincial council elections.

The security situation in Afghanistan remains extremely challenging. As highlighted in the Secretary-General's report (S/2009/674), the security situation has worsened over the reporting period, with a 65 per cent increase in the number of incidents from 2008, including the tragic attack of 28 October 2009, which highlighted the increased level of risk exposure for United Nations personnel. In this context, the European Union wishes to reiterate its condolences to the families of the victims.

The European Union concurs with the Secretary-General that, to reverse this downward trend, the new Government will have to show resolve in implementing political reform that addresses the root causes of the insurgency, including through efforts aimed at improving governance and an Afghan-led political process to re-establish peace. Also, everything possible must be done to avoid civilian casualties.

The European Union actively supports the improvement of good governance, the rule of law, the fight against corruption and impunity, and respect for human rights in Afghanistan. Building Afghan capacity and ownership in the police and civil sectors remains at the core of the European Union's engagement in Afghanistan, as reaffirmed in our recent plan of action. The European Union Police Mission in Afghanistan is clear proof of that active and continued engagement. Equally, the European Union urges the new Afghan Government to give the utmost priority to the

achievement of significant progress in those areas, especially at the sub-national level.

Stability, security and development in Afghanistan are closely linked to the overall situation in the region. The European Union strongly supports the development of a coordinated approach at the regional level and enhanced cooperation between Afghanistan and its neighbours, especially Pakistan. The EU has initiated decisive steps to strengthen and achieve a more coherent and concerted approach to EU action in Afghanistan and Pakistan through its plan of action for the region.

The European Union strongly supports UNAMA in its important role as the coordinator of international efforts, while recognizing Member States' responsibility to provide UNAMA with the necessary resources to perform this task. The European Union concurs with the Secretary-General that a more focused and better coordinated international civilian effort, under a United Nations umbrella and within the framework of a transition strategy, is urgently required.

In that regard, the European Union is ready to further explore initiatives such as the establishment of a reinforced and dedicated civilian coordination structure that ensures strong Afghan ownership and the involvement of all major stakeholders, and the appointment of a senior civilian official within the International Security Assistance Force. Those and other initiatives, including the improvement of existing coordination mechanisms, need careful analysis.

The European Union also looks forward to the upcoming London Conference, on 28 January, and the subsequent Kabul conference, which will offer an opportunity for the new Afghan Government to lay out its priorities, plans and commitments. The United Nations will have a prominent role in both conferences. For the international community they will be occasions to review and reaffirm its engagement in Afghanistan. We should agree on new goals, benchmarks and timelines in order to renew a common framework for our work towards the shared goal of a peaceful and secure Afghanistan. Those conferences also represent an important step towards the formulation and subsequent implementation of a transition strategy, with the emphasis on building up the Afghan National Security Forces and the gradual handover of responsibility for security to Afghanistan's own authorities.

The European Union reiterates its full recognition that the primary responsibility for the development of the country lies with the Afghan Government and people themselves. But I would like to assure the Council that the European Union will continue to play an active role in assisting Afghanistan on its road to security, stability and prosperity, in close cooperation and coordination with UNAMA and other international actors.

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): There are no further speakers inscribed on my list. The Security Council has thus concluded the present stage of its consideration of the item on its agenda.

The meeting rose at 1.35 p.m.